THE WEST LONDON JOINT RAILWAYS

J. B. ATKINSON

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Way out
1,2 A B C and D
Ticket office
Underground

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J. B. ATKINSON

LONDON
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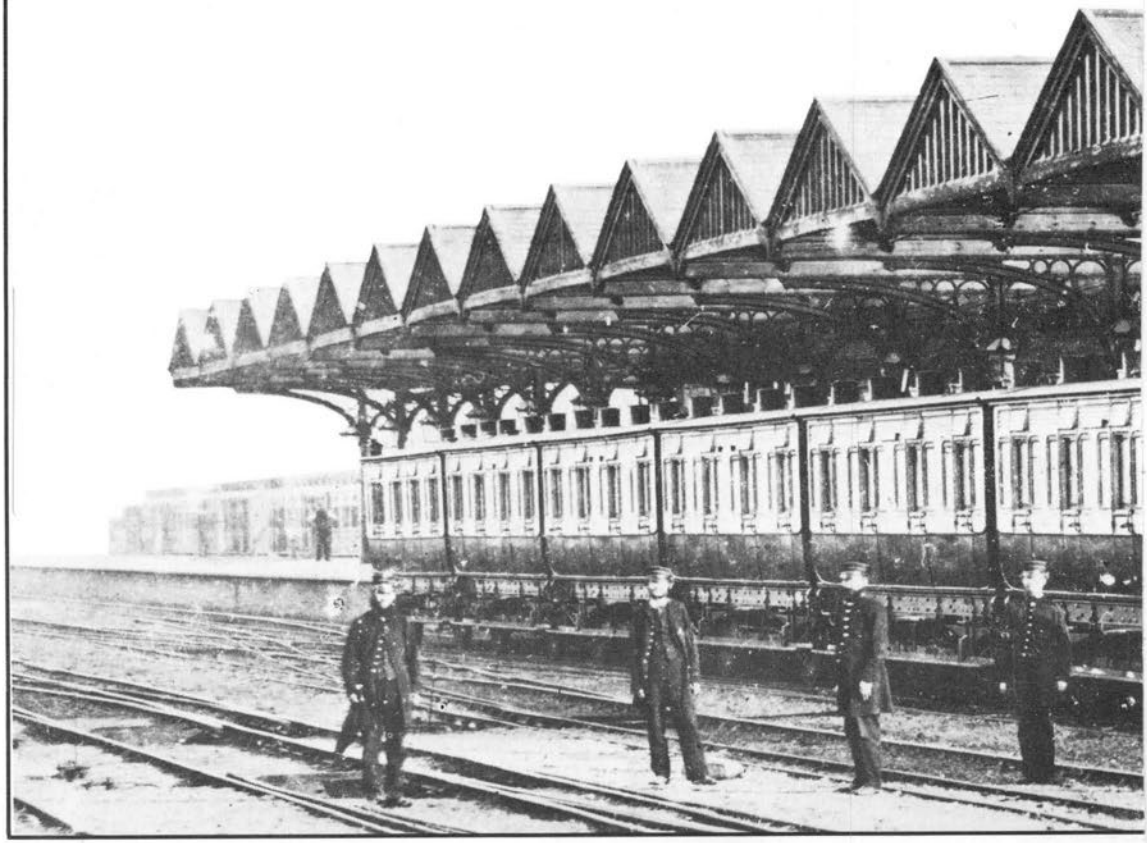
It has been a conscious decision to include in this volume photographs of historic interest which might, in other conditions, have been excluded on grounds of quality. It is hoped that the reader will accept the consequent reduction in the production standards of some plates.

Unaccredited photographs have come from the author's own collection.

Previous page:
BR Sulzer Type 2 No 7667 on northbound exchange freight train at Kensington, 6 August 1969. *J. H. Cooper-Smith*

Below:
This photo shows LSWR 2-4-0WT No 190 of 1863 at Kensington station. *Locomotive Publishing Co*



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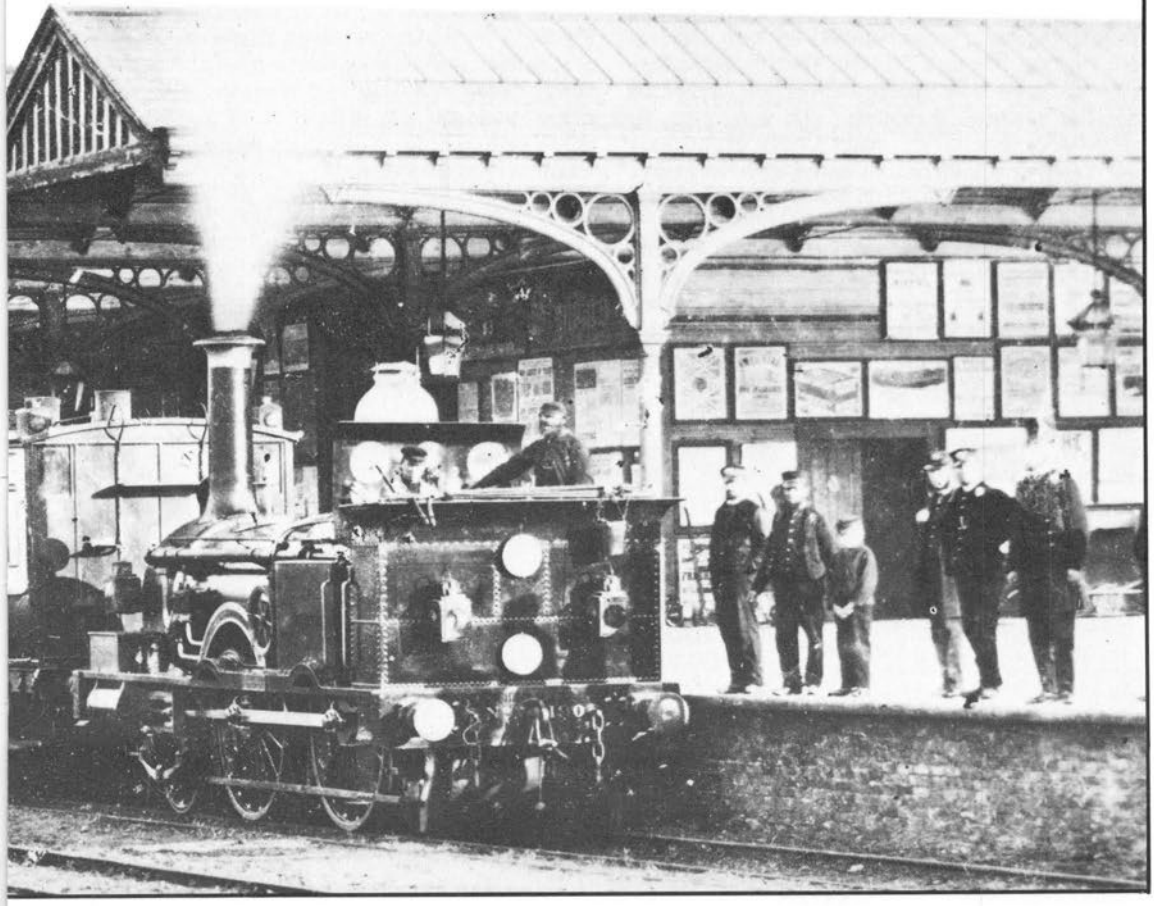


Acknowledgements

In a work of this kind acknowledgement should be made of both primary and secondary sources of information used. For the first I am most grateful to the staff of the Public Record Office, the Librarian of the Greater London Council archives at County Hall, the staff of the Imperial War Museum library, and the Librarians of the Local History Sections of the Kensington and Hammersmith Public Libraries. Also as primary sources should be mentioned the many original documents collected by D. V. LeVien in 1936 and summarised in a typescript paper now in the Public Record Office, the various construction contracts of 1860-2, and the invaluable *Herepaths Journal* which, from 1836 to 1855, gives surprisingly detailed reports of the affairs of so minor a railway. For more recent history I have drawn on the many first-hand accounts of train movements by contributors to *Railway World, Railway Magazine* and *Railway Observer*, supplementing my own observations over the 20 years 1917-36. There has also been an excellent but all too short history of the line by H. V. Borley and R. W. Kidner.

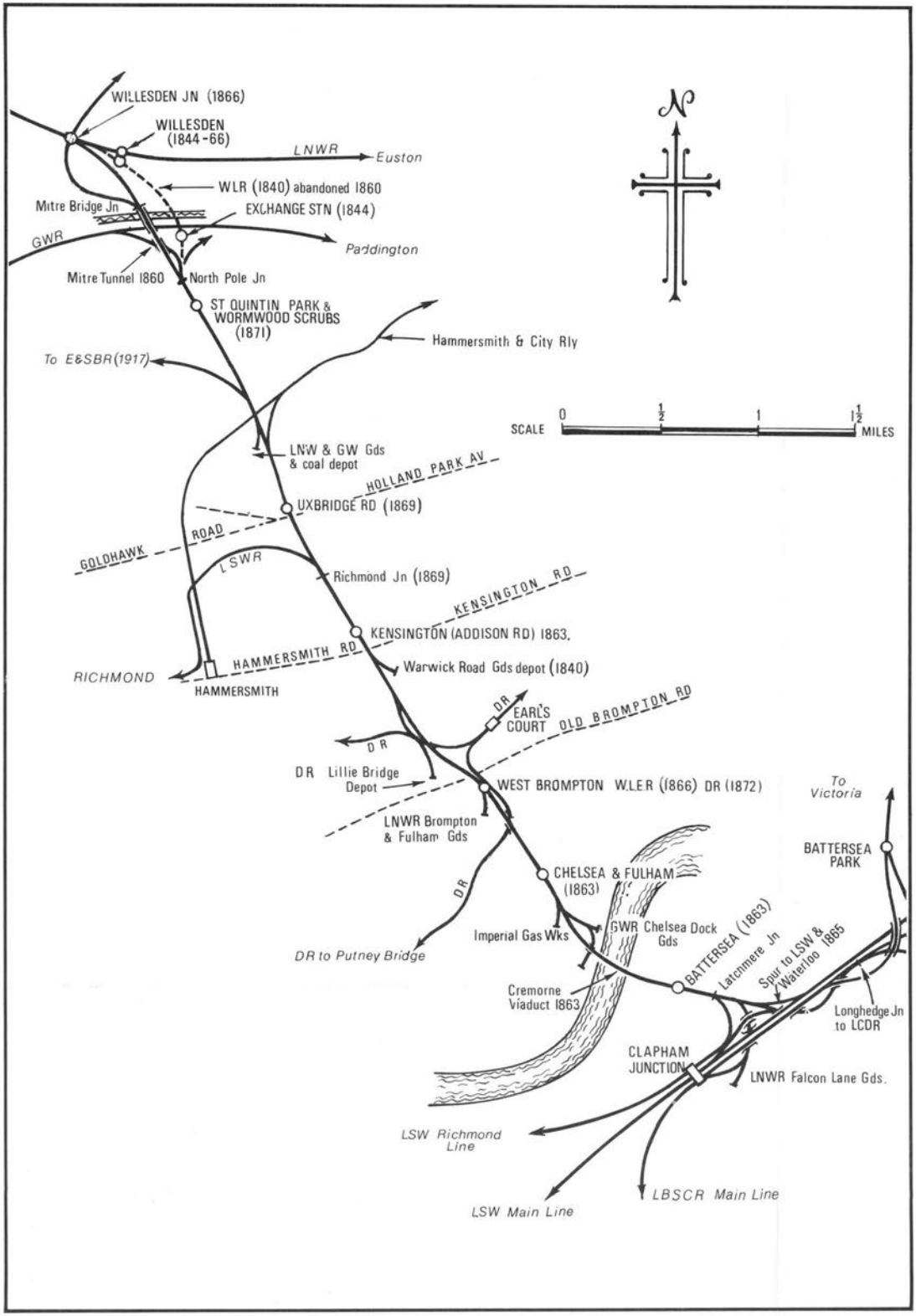
Secondary sources on which I have drawn have been mainly publications on London travel in general and on locomotive history. Of the first I am indebted to the works of E. A. Pratt, J. A. B. Hamilton, O. S. Nock and G. Savage on wartime services in both wars, and to those of C. Klapper, E. Course, H. P. White, H. Ralph, E. T. MacDermot and W. L. Steel on London railway history in general. For the recent development of the Motorail service I have drawn on the survey of J. N. Faulkner in *Railway World*.

For information on steam locomotives (of which the line by its byway nature was so prolific) I have used the works of H. C. Casserley, S. W. Johnson, S. Cotterell and L. A. Asher on pre-grouping railways generally, and those of H. Holcroft and the panel of writers for the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society on the Great Western Railway. For locomotive details of the southern railways I have drawn from the works of D. L. Bradley and N. Wakeman.

I would like to express my gratitude to R. F. Harris who read the first draft of the work and provided additional information covering the years 1937-67, and to the Librarian of the Ian Allan Library from which so many of the illustrations have been drawn. My thanks go also to Inspector Tierney of Western Region, British Railways, who patiently walked the length of the line with me in 1966. Finally, I would like to put on record my indebtedness to the late Signalman Summerton of Kensington South Main signalbox just after the Great War, whose patience and toleration of an inquisitive eleven-year-old boy gave me an interest in railways which has proved lifelong.

J. B. Atkinson

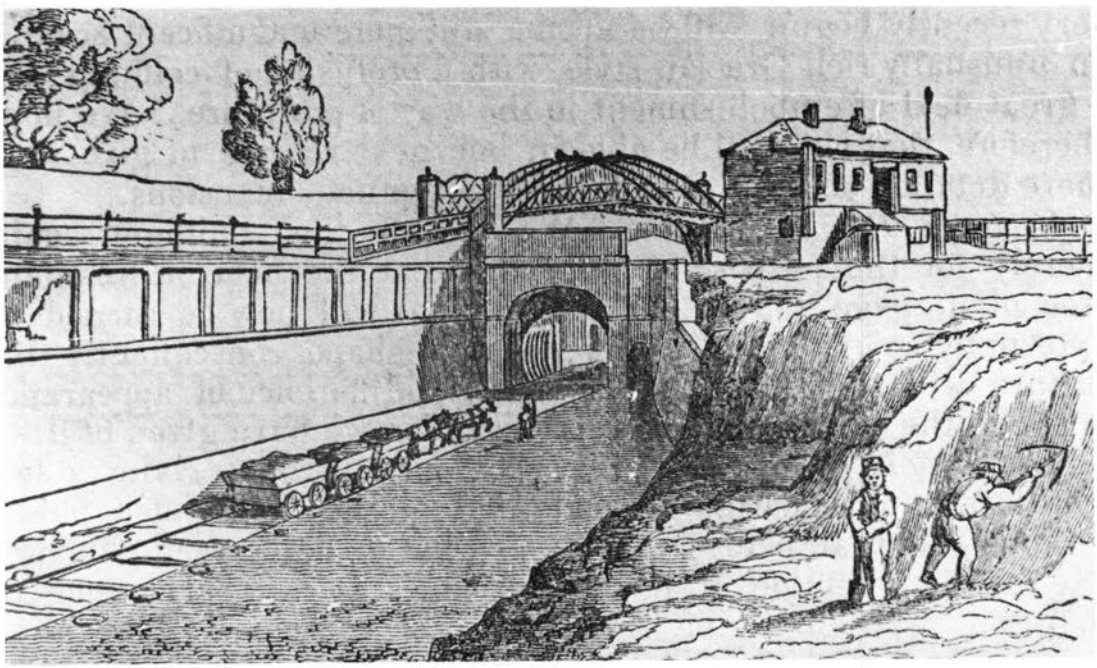
Right:
A General Map of the West London Joint Railways.


WILLESDEN JN (1866)
WILLESDEN (1844-66)
LNWR
Euston
WLR (1840) abandoned 1860
Mitre Bridge Jn
EXCHANGE STN (1844)
GWR
Paddington
Mitre Tunnel 1860
North Pole Jn
ST QUINTIN PARK & WORMWOOD SCRUBS (1871)
Hammersmith & City Rly
To E&SBR(1917)
SCALE 0 ½ 1 1½ MILES
LNW & GW Gds & coal depot
HOLLAND PARK AV
UXBRIDGE RD (1869)
GOLDHAWK ROAD
LSWR
Richmond Jn (1869)
KENSINGTON RD
KENSINGTON (ADDISON RD) 1863.
HAMMERSMITH RD
RICHMOND
HAMMERSMITH
Warwick Road Gds depot (1840)
DR
EARL'S COURT
OLD BROMPTON RD
DR
DR Lillie Bridge Depot
WEST BROMPTON W.L.E.R (1866) DR (1872)
To Victoria
LNWR Brompton & Fulham Gds
BATTERSEA PARK
CHELSEA & FULHAM (1863)
DR
Imperial Gas Wks
GWR Chelsea Dock Gds
BATTERSEA (1863)
Latchmere Jn
Spur to LSW & Waterloo 1865
DR to Putney Bridge
Cremorne Viaduct 1863
Longhedge Jn to LCDR
CLAPHAM JUNCTION
LNWR Falcon Lane Gds.
LSW Richmond Line
LBSCR Main Line
LSW Main Line

1
The Birmingham, Bristol & Thames Junction Railway: 1836-61

Among the select handful of railways authorised in the reign of King William IV was a short line called the Birmingham, Bristol & Thames Junction Railway, intended by its promoters to join the London to Birmingham and London to Bristol railways (then under construction) with the Thames by way of the Kensington Canal. The Act for the railway's construction was passed on 21 June 1836 and authorised the issue of 7,500 £20 shares, the amount paid to be £15.[1] The Company was to have 12 directors, three retiring annually. The line was to run from a junction with the Birmingham line east of Holesden Green (later called Willesden) down to a tunnel under the Paddington Canal, after which its course was described in detail as 'across Wormholt Scrubs through Eynham Farm and over the brickfields of Messrs Scott to Shepherds Bush, where it passes under the Uxbridge road to Clutterbuck's brickfields and thence through the lands of Lord Holland, dividing Counters Creek at Mr Lee's nursery and immediately east of the house. The railway crosses the Hammersmith road and passing the end of Kensington Crescent terminates at a basin of the Kensington Canal.[2] The canal had been built

Below:
An artist's impression of the construction of the Thames Junction Railway on the north side of Mitre Bridge aqueduct in 1839.



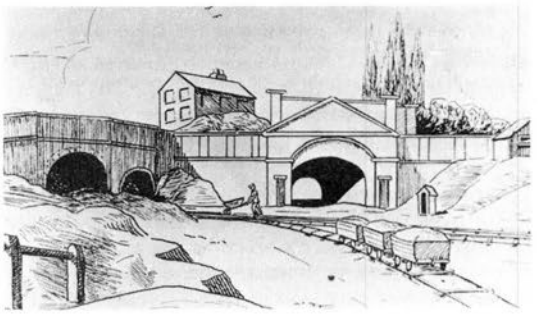
under an Act of 1824 and used 1½ miles of a small river known as Counters Brook, rising near Kensal Green and serving good agricultural land down to the Thames at 'the Salt Peter works of Philippe la Fontaine at Lot's Meadow'. The canal was 100ft wide and ended in a basin 400×200ft just south of Counters Bridge, later to be known as Addison Bridge.[3]. It was opened on 12 August 1828 with considerable ceremony by Lord Kensington 'in goodly company on a stately barge' with other barges loaded with coal, sand and timber. The proprietors had hoped for a revenue of at least £2,500 a year from barge dues and wharf rents, but the canal never became popular, and by 1839 they were glad to sell the whole enterprise to the Thames Junction Railway for £40,000. The railway's Secretary, John Thompson, took over the management of the canal, confirmed the lock-keeper James Lillywhite in his appointment (at 24 shillings a week) but added new duties. He had now not only to manage the canal basin's traffic but collect dues and rents for the railway when it began operation. Soon there were complaints about the canal's condition. The many small farms, and the domestic buildings that were beginning to take their place, all used the canal as their sewer, and on part of the land north of the basin a large stagnant pool developed which lasted for many years near the site of the railway's first terminus on a stretch of land known as Froglinton. To still the many complaints the Company brought in a surveyor, who reported that the canal banks were in a bad state and suggested repairs, but the directors only authorised a meagre £10 for these, while Thompson wrote to the lock-keeper: 'Do not expend one farthing for any purpose beyond what is absolutely necessary to keep the canal navigable'. To carry the story of the canal to its end, economies were made by using part of the lock-keeper's cottage as the Company's offices and building a small boardroom on the northside of the house, but no real effort was made to keep the canal in repair. By 1859 it seems to have been largely out of use, and an Act for its abandonment was obtained in 1861.

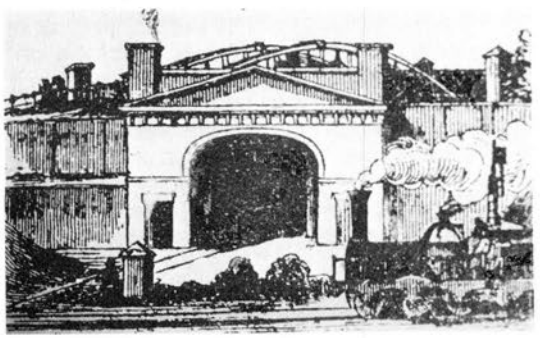
Construction of the Thames Junction Railway was very slow. The major engineering work was the short tunnel by which the line was to pass under the Paddington Canal, and this was started in 1836 and partially built by May 1837.[4] The canal had to be diverted to built it, and when restored to its original course left space to provide wharves for the company's use. By 1838 the tunnel was being used to carry spoil from the deep cutting on the north side to provide much-needed fill for the embankment at Wormwood Scrubs. The cutting itself was faced with concrete retaining walls encased in brick to support the turnpike road on one side and the canal bank on the other. The north face of the tunnel seems to have been rather roughly finished, for a report on the work in 1838 describes it as 'strong and substantial, but plain to a degree almost amounting to ugliness'. In contrast, the south portal came in for much attention, already described in 1837 as 'a gallery 120ft long constructed in brickwork of considerable beauty and of excellent workmanship and having a handsome front to the south and a collateral corridor or ground arcade connecting with the gallery by open arches as a footway between the adjacent stations'. Designed by Brunel and William Hoskings (the Company's Engineer) and built by the contractor Cubitt, it certainly was in the best tradition of railway architecture of the time — in fact several engravings and woodcuts of the south portal survive. Though built for double track, only a single line was ever laid through the tunnel; it was used until 1860 and then remained standing for another 50 years. The effort of building it seems however to have exhausted the Company's funds for some time — by the end of 1838 it had spent £28,223; £14,459 was for 'Works', most of this being for the tunnel.

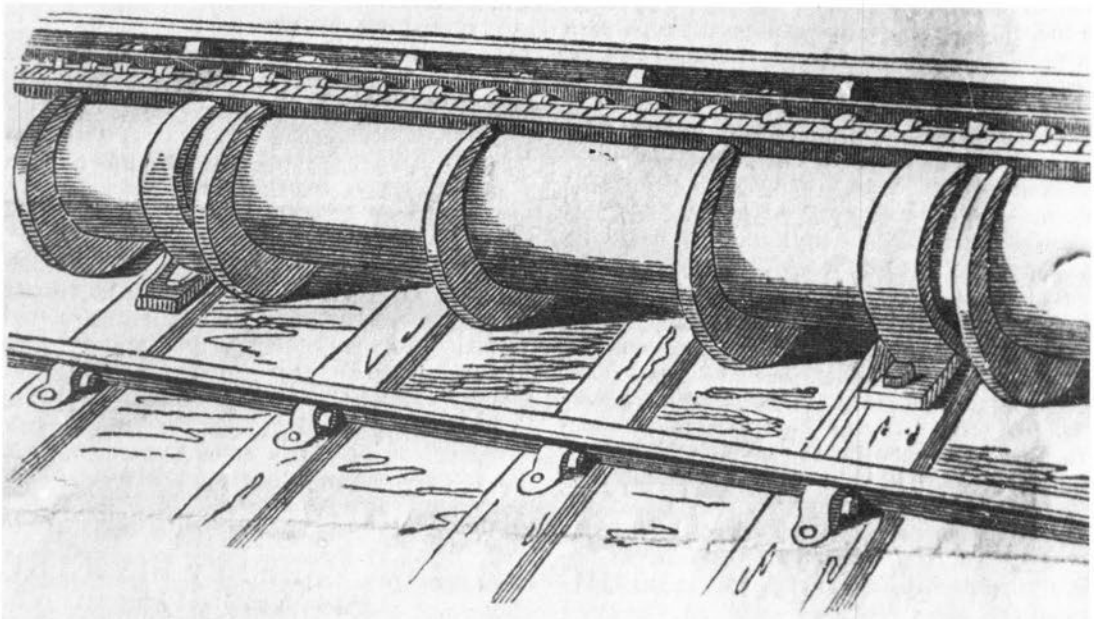
By 1838 all but two purchases of land had been made, but at the Kensington end the landowner Clutterbuck made exorbitant demands for compensation, went to arbitration and eventually received £1,418. In 1839 the line was described as being 'ready for ballasting from the London &

Below:
The aqueduct under Paddington Canal in 1837 during construction of the GWR.

Bottom:
In 1840 the Mitre Bridge crossing had a single line of rails but no signals.





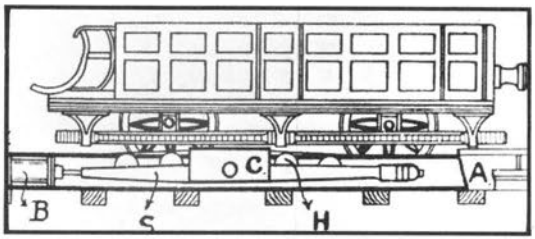


PORTION OF THE TUBE ON THE LINE.

Birmingham junction to the Uxbridge Road, but at Kensington Crescent they were very much troubled with water'.[5] Fortunately, the Great Western Railway (GWR) had agreed (in 1836) to build an exchange station 'as a sign of the amicable and cordial feeling which exists' — fortunately, because later events meant that feelings did not remain cordial for very long.

One reason for the company's lack of money was the difficulty in calling in share payment arrears, amounting by 1840 to some £28,000.[6] The railway could not pay its debts, let alone go on building, yet in the mania of railway promotion of the time plans were made for an extension through Brompton to Hyde Park Corner; however, as this had not been in the original Act the shareholders made it an excuse for not honouring their share-calls and went to arbitration about it. When therefore the proprietors of an altogether new kind of railway approached the Company for the hire of part of its rail-bed for experimental construction, the West London Railway (it had in 1840 changed to this simpler name) was glad to get any income it could and agreed to the proposals.

This new project was the atmospheric railway system invented by Henry Pinkus. It used the pressure of air on a piston (fitted under the train) which ran in a pipe from which the air ahead of it had been withdrawn by pumping, the vacuum thus created drawing the train. He had patented the idea in 1834, and in 1836 had formed the National Pneumatic Railway Association and built a machine to run on



Top:
The pipe of Clegg & Samuda's atmospheric system, laid between the rails.

Above:
Diagram of the atmospheric train working.

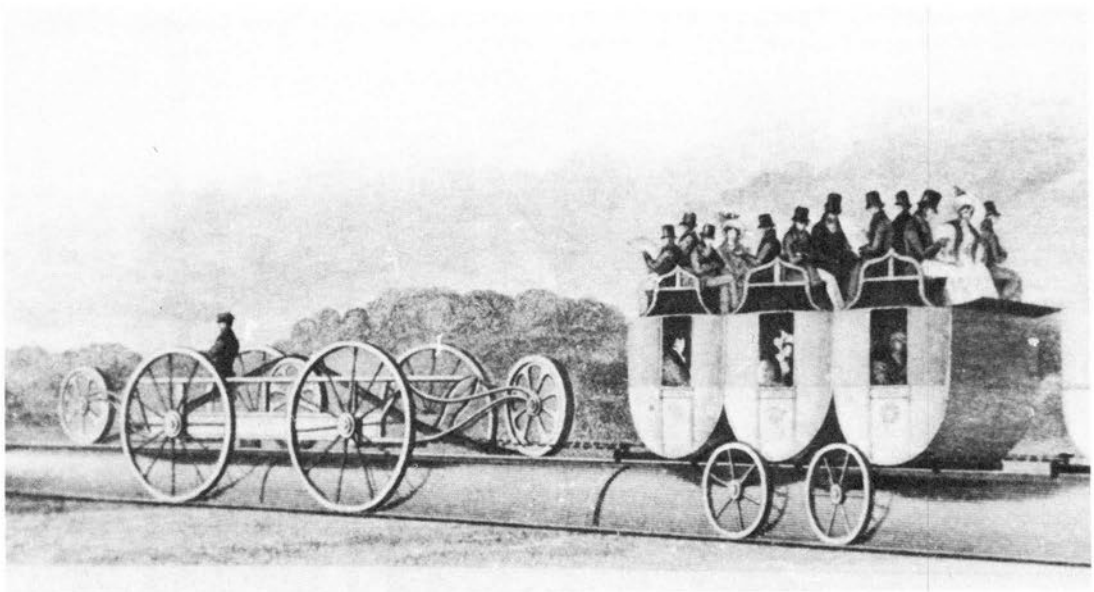
Right:
An atmospheric train with coach, c1840.

about half a mile of pipe and rails beside the Kensington Canal. When the West London Railway took over the canal it cleared everything away; in the words of the aggrieved inventor 'the works were on the threshold of demonstration when they were broken up . . . by the directors of a public company'. However, the system had attracted the attention of other inventors, and in 1839 the firm of Clegg & Samuda made a proposal to the West London directors. This was that the firm (claiming to be the patentees) should lay at its own expense experimental atmospheric track from Uxbridge Road to the

London & Birmingham line, using the completed tunnel. If the system was successful the railway company was to purchase the plant and work the rest of its line under the system. The directors inspected some plant at Samuda's works and agreed (with some conditions on ballasting and running costs, and a terminal date for the experiments), but just when all this was settled Henry Pinkus returned to the scene and claimed that Clegg & Samuda were infringing his patents. Clegg in fact had greatly improved the original system, and after some bickering it was agreed that the trials should go ahead. The line was laid with old rails and square stone block sleepers bought from the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, which had found them unsuitable for its own use. There were difficulties from the start. Firstly, the GWR flatly refused (quite reasonably) to have the new device crossing its rails on the level; and secondly the earthworks of the West London line involved an embankment across Wormwood Scrubs and the Company complained that Clegg was removing earth from one side of the embankment to make up and ballast the experimental line on the other, instead of providing ballast of his own.

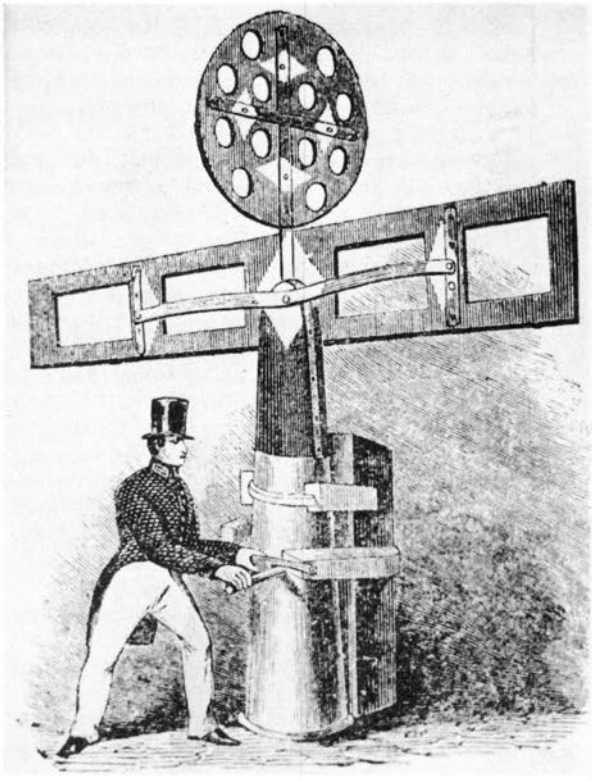
At this point a description should be given of the equipment used, which had had several improvements since its earlier trials. A cast iron pipe of 9in internal diameter was laid between the rails, with lugs on the lower surface embedded in ballast to prevent creeping under load. On the top of the pipe was a continuous slot about $2\frac{1}{2}$in wide, closed by a belt of leather (described as a longitudinal valve) hinged to one side of the slot. The leather was stiffened on both sides by wrought-iron plates, so that it would more readily fall back over the gap when released and so seal the pipe ready for the next use. In the pipe ran a piston connected by a bar upwards to the driving unit or coach. A stationary engine beside the line pumped out the air from the pipe, creating a vacuum into which the train's piston was propelled by the pressure of the atmosphere admitted. As the train moved, the bar automatically opened up the next 3ft section of the valve, the section then being closed by a roller as the coach passed over it. This roller also pressed the leather into a mixture of beeswax and tallow, made soft for sealing purposes by a charcoal burner under the carriage.

The trials finally used a single line, from a point three chains south of the Great Western line to the Uxbridge road, marked with posts every two chains distance. The gradients averaged about 1 in 115. The traction unit was a truck fitted with the piston, two old coaches — probably scrapped stagecoaches fitted with flanged wheels — were hired, and on 11 June 1840 the trials started. The announcement had excited considerable public interest and 'a vast concourse of noblemen, gentlemen, Members of Parliament, scientific and railway gentlemen had collected, well besprinkled with a goodly portion of the fair sex'. Among the engineers were Brunel (who later was to use the system in Devon), Sir Frederick Smith (Inspector-General of Railways), Professor Barlow (a civil engineer) and Hensman, an engineer from Waltham Cross. The Inspector-General's report speaks of a speed of 40mph (probably with the traction unit only), but the more detailed report by Henman gives 30mph with a 5ton 3cwt load and $22\frac{1}{2}$mph with a 11ton 5cwt load. He also estimated the losses (out of 40hp produced) at 12hp from the friction of the airpump and lifting valves, 1hp from the friction of the piston and 3hp from leakage. The pumping house had been built just east of the



embankment, on the southern corner of Little Wormwood Scrubs, and the engine, working at 40-42 strokes per min for 1½-2min, produced a vacuum of 18in of mercury at each end of the line.[7] Repeated trials were made, and there was also a visit by royalty; Prince Albert, ever interested in the scientific progress of his age, visited the scene on 29 June 1840.

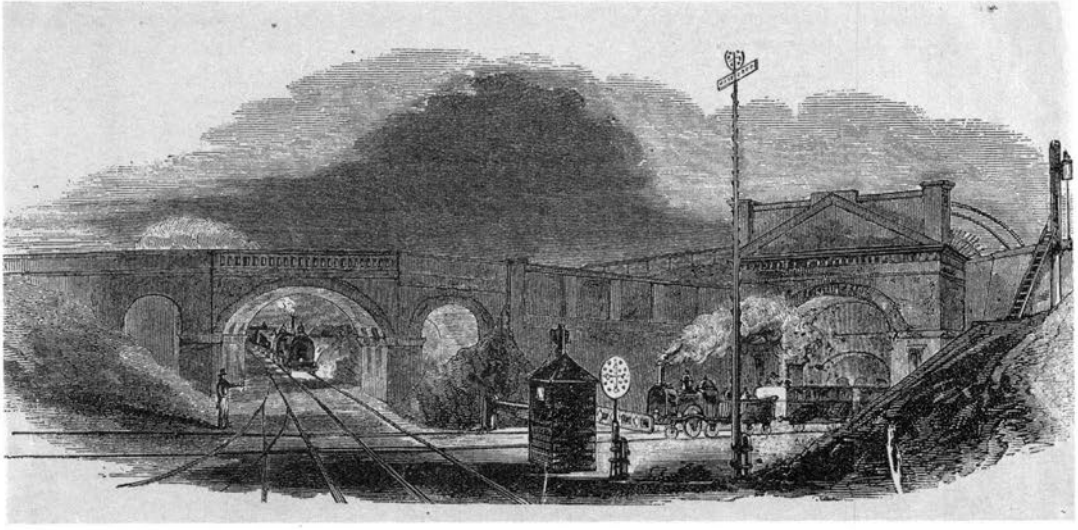
On the whole the trials were inconclusive, perhaps because everything was on slightly too small a scale. The pumping engine had too small a boiler to supply enough steam for very long, the 9in pipe was certainly of too small diameter (even the 1836 experiment had used one of 13½in) and the power loss was almost 50%, though this last was partly due to very poor equipment. One engineer observed that 'one of the carriages was a clumsy, ill-built thing and the road was in a bad state, being laid with old worn-out twisted rails'. At the end of the tests Brunel reported favourably,[8] but George Stephenson's blunt comment was 'It won't do. It's only a modification of the fixed engine and rope. Wait a little and you see I am right. It's a great humbug'.[9] Lord Kensington dismissed it as 'visionary plans as to traction with blowing-machines' and the West London directors showed no interest in buying the equipment. Removal had been set for the end of 1840, but arguments about paying for the ballast dragged on till March 1843. Meanwhile demonstration runs were continued, sometimes twice a week, and on 16 July 1841 interested visitors (from Ireland, where an atmospheric line was later built) including Lord Morpeth and the engineer Vignoles had test runs made; on 12 and 14 January 1842 runs of 26mph and 40mph were achieved with a 5ton load — a creditable performance considering the by then appalling condition of the track, described as 'a kind of zigzag caricature of a railway, certainly no locomotive engine would venture over'.[10] By 1843 several

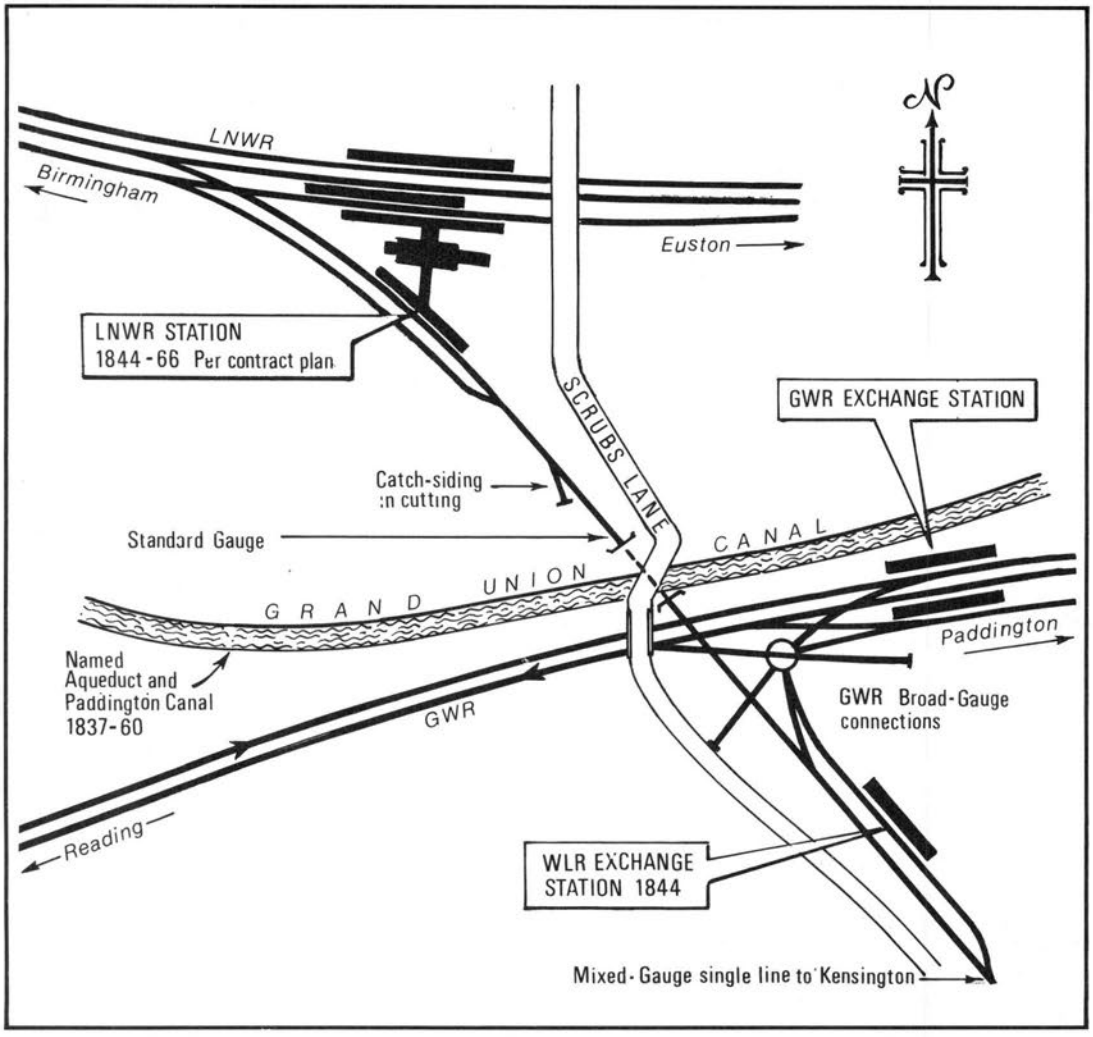


Above:
The West London Railway signal at the Mitre Bridge crossing.

Below:
Mitre Bridge crossing in use in 1844 — now with signals. *Illustrated London News*

Right:
The Exchange Stations at Willesden and Mitre Bridge, 1844.





generations of rats had found the tallow and beeswax highly palatable and had eaten most of the sealing, and the last tests were made in March that year, after which the Company paid Clegg & Samuda £350. The West London Railway had by now spent some £140,000 and was about £40,000 in debt, yet in 1842 no work had been done at all. The directors were told 'the cutting of the railway is become a canal and the embankment looks like an old house to let, delapidated and overgrown with weeds'. The was criticism too that the directors 'notwithstanding the unhappy situation of the Company, clung to their remuneration of £600 per annum'. As year after year the railway lay idle another inventor sought to hire the line for experiments. This was the Count de l'Isle who had founded the Patent Woodpaving Co and wished to try out trains on his wooden track. However the railway was still encumbered with the remains of the atmospheric experiment and was in no mood for more. The directors now tried to sell the whole line to the London & Birmingham railway, with or without canal, but for the moment no one was interested. However, Robert Stephenson was appointed Engineer to the line, a shrewd move since he was not only professionally concerned in getting the line opened but could further his own interests establishing what were then called Inland Coal Depots at Shepherds Bush and Kensington, both promising markets for domestic coal. This he would obtain from his father's mines at Clay Cross, and he offered the Company sixpence per ton for transport provided land was made available to him at these two points, and eventually a figure of ninepence per ton was agreed upon in 1844.

By various means the Company raised enough money to resume laying its line — the word used was 'reconstruction', suggesting that a lot of the earlier work had to be improved — and two contracts were signed in 1843. One was with Fox, Henderson & Co for a 'deep cutting north of the

Above:
The Railway Mania — the rush to deposit plans with the Board of Trade. *Illustrated London News*

Below:
Frantic last-minute amendments in a coffee house before submission of plans to the Board of Trade. *Illustrated London News*

Paddington Canal', work on which had evidently not been completed by the original contractors, though the retaining walls had been built. The cutting was about 16ft deep where it left the north face of the tunnel and rose on a steep gradient of 1 in 36 through land known as Gamecock Common to join the London & Birmingham Railway's line in the down (northerly) direction. The other contract was with Thomas Earl for completing the line from the Paddington Canal to the Kensington one. The line was to run along an embankment across Wormwood Scrubs (much of this was already built, but had deteriorated), then follow a shallow cutting for a quarter of a mile after passing under the Uxbridge turnpike road, before ending at a station to be constructed at Kensington; all works were to be built for two tracks of mixed-gauge width.

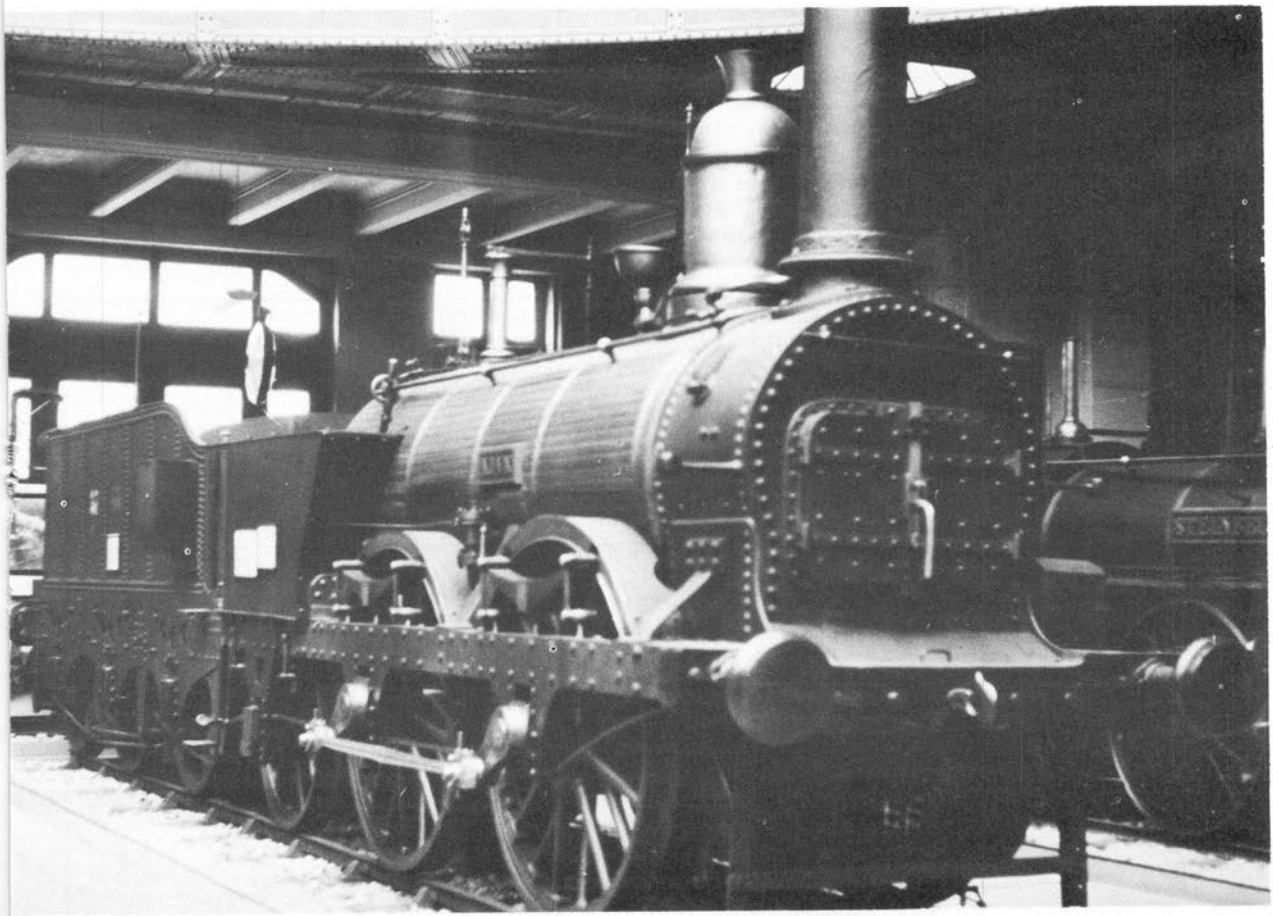
Looking now at the stations serving the line, the northernmost was that built in 1842 on the London & Birmingham line about a mile west of the junction of the two railways. Known as Holsden, this had two platforms (one each side of the main lines), the northern one having a siding about 50yds long for coal trains. This was used to assemble the occasional con-

tractor's train, and later the Stephensons' coal trains for their Inland Coal Depots at Shepherds Bush and Kensington Basin. There were semaphore signals on each platform and these, in accordance with the practice of the time, were kept at danger for 5min after the departure of a passenger train, or 8min after a slow one, before being put to 'clear'. The Stationmaster, known as 'Old Spinks',[11] had a house at the crossing, and there were also two porters, but as there were reputedly only about eight passengers a day they cannot have had much to do. Perhaps the real reason for having the station at all was that the General Manager of the line, Capt Huish, lived nearby.

When at last passenger service to the West London line was planned this station was clearly unsuitable for exchange purposes, as using it would involve occupation of the main line tracks just when the intended connecting trains were due. A new station, known as West London Junction, was therefore built in the angle between the join of the two railways. This was a substantial brick and stone building and had booking office, waiting room and stationmaster's house, but apparently at the time no platforms. Though it only served its purpose for a few months in 1844 (it was not opened till July of that year, two months after pssenger services had started) the station house survived for some 130 years, becoming known as Signal House and serving as the dwelling house for a succession of retired railwaymen.[12]

From this new Willesden station the line descended steeply between brick retaining walls to the tunnel, and rose again to cross the GWR lines on the level — even though this was specifically forbidden in the Act of 1836. The crossing was from the first a cause of trouble. The West London had the prior claim to the ground, as it had been authorised before the GWR ones and its single line of standard gauge had to cross the broad-gauge ones at right angles. For safety (but only later, c1844) there were heavy wooden barriers, carrying spring buffers, across the West London track which had to be raised

Below:
The nearest surviving engine to the West London Railway — the 0-4-2 engine *Ajax* of 1841, in Vienna Museum.



Above:
The first Willesden station, seen here in 1841-2, was built at the Acton Lane crossing.

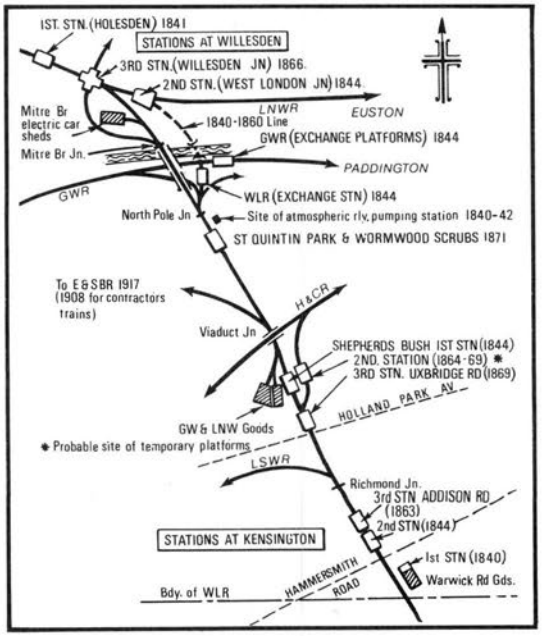
Above right:
This is the second Willesden station, at the junction of the LNWR and WLR, built in 1844.

Right:
Mitre Bridge crossing exchange station (with the GWR), 1844. *GWR Magazine*

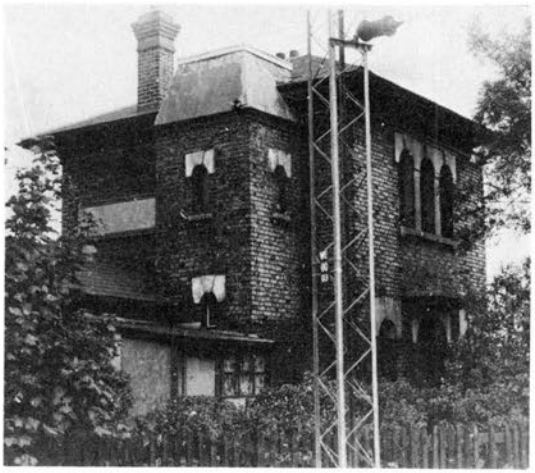
by ropes, and there was also a catch siding on the west side of the approach cutting from Willesden. Signalling, introduced in 1844, was by a very tall disc-and-crossbar post for the GWR lines, and a short one for West London trains at the crossing itself. The up broad-gauge line also had two distant signals, half a mile and one mile to the west.[13]

As early as 1836 Saunders of the GWR had proposed strict rules for the crossing, so onerous in fact that Thompson wrote saying that it put his railway in the power of the other to close completely at will. Indeed, by 1837 Thompson was proposing that his line might be abandoned altogether for a suitable consideration.[14] However, construction went ahead, if slowly, and Thompson wrote to Saunders to complain about damage by GWR workmen.[15] Meanwhile a few ballast trains, usually of three small trucks hauled by a pair of horses, were using the crossing, though by 1840 a locomotive was used, and this was involved in the first collision at the crossing in April that year. It was pushing a construction train south, quite blindly — the driver could not see the crossing at all — and it was run into by an up GWR train and both trains were derailed. In the stagnant period 1840-43, when hardly any work was being done, the GWR simply removed the crossing rails and laid its own without a break.[16]

The next station was an interchange one for the GWR, with a brick-built station house and a single platform in the area later used for the West London carriage sidings. Short wooden platforms were built to the east of this on either side of the GWR main lines, in anticipation of exchange passengers, and though only used for a short period in 1844 were still in place some 20 years later. The station house too only served as such for a few months in 1844 but lasted some 90 years as a dwelling house and was only demolished c1934. The sole GWR access to the line (until 1860) was by a small turntable from a short siding entered from the west. No GWR engine could therefore get on to the West London metals,



Right:
A General Map of the West London Railway.



and such broad-gauge trucks as used the line (the Company's own or from the GWR) had to be worked perilously in mixed-gauge trains with oblique coupling-chains and non-matching buffers.

The line then rose to the brow of the hill, from where it was laid on an embankment (cutting off part of Wormwood Scrubs, described at the time as 'a plain kept for exercising the Household Brigade and the Life and Horse Guards when quartered in London'). The next station was at Shepherds Bush, which was then almost a village. A surveyor reported that the streets there were 'unpaved and full of rats, the surface strewn with refuse of almost every conceivable description, offensive and disgusting, emitting effluvia of the most nauseous character'. However, the Company thought that there might still be pasengers despite the effluvia, and built a substantial brick station house, backing on to the already busy coal depot.[17] The station was several hundred feet north of where Uxbridge Road station was later built and had a single platform about twice the length of the station house, access from the Uxbridge road being by a small lane called Frog Island. Passing under the road the line then ran south through a shallow cutting on to level fields, from which the Counters Brook had been diverted into a sewer-pipe. The land on the west side of the line here was a vineyard of Messrs Lee & Kennedy.[18]

The last station was at the canal head, where one line continued the full length of the basin to provide direct transhipment from barges, and a second siding ran beside it. Another short spur ran close under a small mound on which Portland place (now Addison Bridge Place) stood with some nice houses, one of which was the home of the poet Coleridge. These, and the Hand & Flower inn on the corner of the turnpike road, are still there. From the east side of the line a sharply curved spur led to Warwick Road. This last had narrow-gauge rails only, all other lines being of mixed-gauge. The first Kensington station was a very small building perched on the north wall of the canal basin and served at right angles by a turntable and a short spur. However convenient this might have been for supervising transfer traffic from the canal, it was invisible from the turnpike road, and new site was found just north of the road. There is some doubt about when this was built, as its platform is shown in maps of 1841 while it is recorded as being 'authorised' by Robert Stephenson in September 1843 to be built, with waiting room, at a cost not exceeding £700. Perhaps the building was added to the platform later.[19] On the south side of the turnpike road were built an engine house, water tank, and smithy, at the back of Kensington Crescent.

By 1844, with the opening at last in sight, the directors had to consider what the motive power would be. An oddity of the time was a naive belief that the railway would require hardly any power, and it was seriously considered that it might be worked by horses. An 1839 description of the line solemnly stated that 'carriages will run from any of the upper stations to the basin of the Kensington Canal without any propulsion than what they derive from their own weight'. However, the directors decided that, even if their trains were to hurtle down in the suggested manner they would still need an engine to haul them back. The London & Birmingham Railway had loaned them an engine during construction work but could no longer spare it, so Robert Stephenson was asked to provide one from his works in the North of England. He must have doubted the small line's ability to pay for this, for eventually it was decided to buy a second-hand engine from the North Midland Railway, which at that time was selling off its rolling stock upon amalgamation with another line. For £1,100 was bought an 0-4-2 tender engine, No 67 of that line, built by the firm of Longridge in 1840.[20] The design was Stephenson's and was once a very common type. Perhaps the nearest surviving equivalent is one built in England in 1841 (for the Kaiser Ferdinand's Northern Railway in Austria), named *Ajax* and now in a Vienna museum.

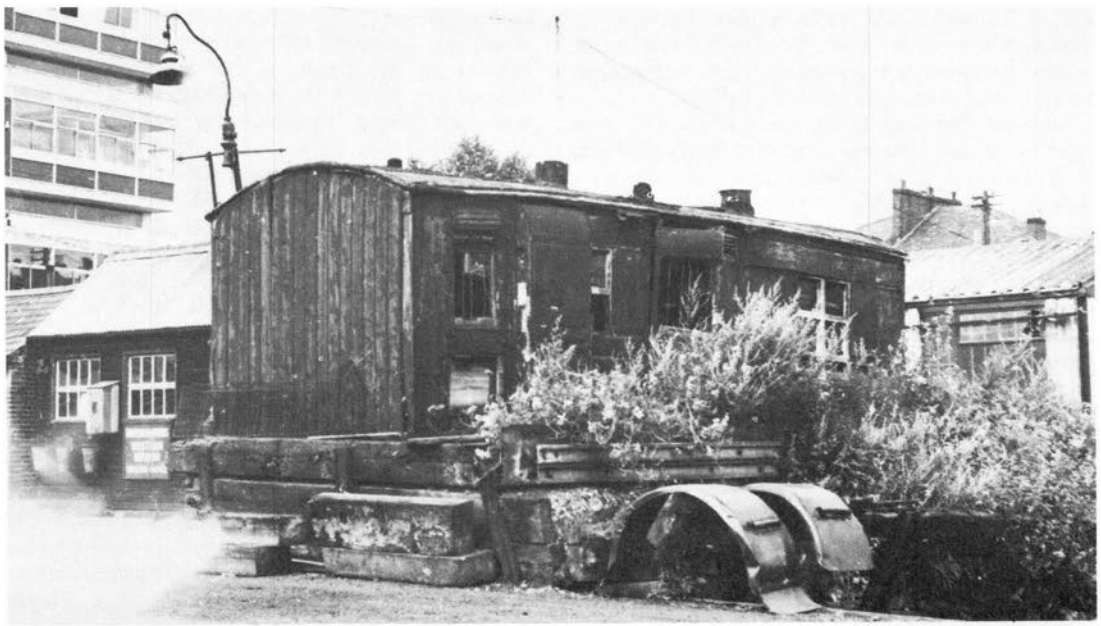
As well as the engine, the Company bought a bare minimum of rolling stock — three carriages and eight trucks.[21] These and the engine were painted a crimson lake colour, the carriages carrying the Company's name on the upper portion. Of necessity the Company had to resort to running 'mixed trains' though Robert Stephenson promptly warned of the danger of the oblique pull of the coupling-chains when such a train was being hauled north, and the even greater danger of the buffers 'not buffing' when the train was being pushed back south.

Now at last the line could be opened for passengers. A Board of Trade inspection on 25 May 1844 (perhaps assisted by drinks at the Hand & Flower) passed it, only requiring a minor alteration to a turntable. A traffic staff of 12 had been engaged, including driver, fireman, guard and porters (who were also switchmen) and all were also enrolled as special constables. The directors planned to celebrate the opening on 27 May with what is described as a 'cold collation' for patrons and guests, but when the time came they decided to have no ceremony and adjourned to the bar of the inn for something stronger, the bill for which was duly sent to the railway. A printed timetable dated 18 June 1844 shows seven trains daily going north and only four coming back. Perhaps the three missing runs were for goods wagons, forming the head of the combined train that the engine was propelling from the rear — in which case one would certainly have discouraged passengers from taking part. Passenger trains were timed to meet either Bristol or Birmingham line trains (one at 10.15am had connections for both). Fares were one shilling for first class and sixpence for second, with no mention of third class although the Company had a carriage for it. These fares were fairly expensive for their time, for a run of only 15min. Luggage was restricted to 40lb and 4cu ft.

Above:
Shepherds Bush station house of 1844, seen from the road in 1969.

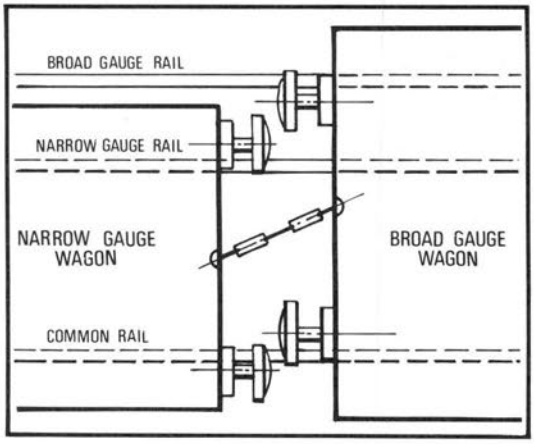
Below:
The old brake van mounted on the wall of the canal basin marks the site of the first Kensington station of 1840.

From the beginning however, passenger traffic was disappointing. The station was too far away from Kensington proper and the railway soon earned a reputation for unpunctuality and missed connections that might see people stranded in the fields of Willesden. This was not so much the Company's



fault as that of the GWR crossing staff, who frequently held up trains due to cross if one of their own trains was late in passing.[22] Soon the West London Railway acquired an unwanted notoriety by being pilloried in *Punch* with cartoons and sarcastic passages of mock-reportage as 'Our own little railway in Kensington'. One such passage read: 'Omnibuses have been put on to meet the trains. The meetings have been strictly private, no one having been present but the driver of the omnibus and the guard of the train.' There were other accounts in the same vein, usually with a kernel of truth in them.[23] An anonymous writer in *Punch* wrote, to the air of a popular tune of the time:

Stay, only stay, where our rails uniting
Will let you join your train.
Why, all our humble efforts rudely slighting,
Still treat us with disdain?
Our passengers at Wormwood Scrubs alighting
Are doomed there to remain.
T'is not well, t'is not well, t'is not well!
Unless a fresh engine we borrow,
Truth to tell, truth to tell, truth to tell,
At the Scrubs they must stay till tomorrow, ah me!



Above:
The Dangers of Working a 'Mixed Train'. A diagram from Robert Stephenson's 'Observations on Mr Brunel's report on the double gauge' (1847). Upon the over-run the buffers would lock, and when the narrow-gauge rail changed to the opposite side the narrow-gauge coach would be forced off the line.

Another trouble was the hardness of the water at Kensington. The line's only engine soon had its boiler furred up on this and once failed on a journey, so the railway had to be closed for a day for the boiler to be washed out. The average number of passengers per month, for August and September 1844, was 560, while in October the figure was 382. Goods traffic was better, 396 tons being handled in October and 244 tons in November. When by that month there were only about eight passengers a day the directors decided to close down passenger services from 1 December. By then the line was being worked at a loss of about £50 a week. *Punch* then jumped in with a final jibe that 'a stoker and a poker are thus thrown out of employment'.

Considering this air of general disaster it is surprising to find that the Company was already negotiating with yet another inventor for the use of the line for experiments. This was William Prosser, inventor of the Guide-Wheel railway, the train running on wooden track with guide-wheels to keep it in place. He proposed to adapt the Company's engine to this system and start working the line in this way on 29 January 1845. By that time however the West London Railway could not implement the agreement it had somewhat rashly signed. Prosser sued for breach of contract and eventually received £250 in settlement.[24]

With the end of passenger services the rolling stock was returned to the builders, but there is some conflict of evidence as to what happened to the locomotive. One account shows it as returned to the Midland Railway which is said to have used it until 1851, while the West London Co's books of 1848 show it as an asset, at £1,515, the difference between this figure and that of purchase four years earlier (£1,100) probably representing the cost of its conversion from tender to tank engine.[25]

The railway was now in a really parlous state, owing money all round. Its liabilities were estimated at £60,000, property had been seized and advertised for sale, a Bill in Chancery had been filed by the contractors for non-payment, the bank account was overdrawn and interest warrants were being returned unpaid. Several of the directors resigned, but three — William Hoskings, William Cubitt and Stephen Bird — agreed to act as a committee to look after the line's affairs. It says a lot for their vision that they put their faith in 'bold extensions'. Two that had long been proposed — one to Knightsbridge, the other to the Thames — were laid before Robert Stephenson for his advice, and he recommended the second. Meanwhile the line was leased to the London & Birmingham Railway, and an Act obtained in 1845 allowing the line to be 'worked in connection with' the London & Birmingham and GWR companies, which between them paid £60,000 in September 1845 to the directors, who could then settle all outstanding liabilities. For economy the offices rented in the City were given up and a small extension built on to the line's lockkeeper's cottage as a Board Room at a cost of £250. John Thompson, who had resigned as Secretary in November 1844 but had continued to help with the administration, was given an honorarium of £500.

The railway continued in business with coal traffic

to both Shepherds Bush and Kensington, and some canal interchange traffic as well. Kensington was growing steadily westwards, bringing more and nearer inhabitants to the company.[26] In 1846 an Act was obtained to extend the line over the river to meet the London & South Western Railway (LSWR) at Wandsworth Road, and the patient shareholders could now look forward to some return on their investments. Before this could happen the wild promotion of fancifully-named railways all over the kingdom had had its inevitable result — the bubble indeed had burst.

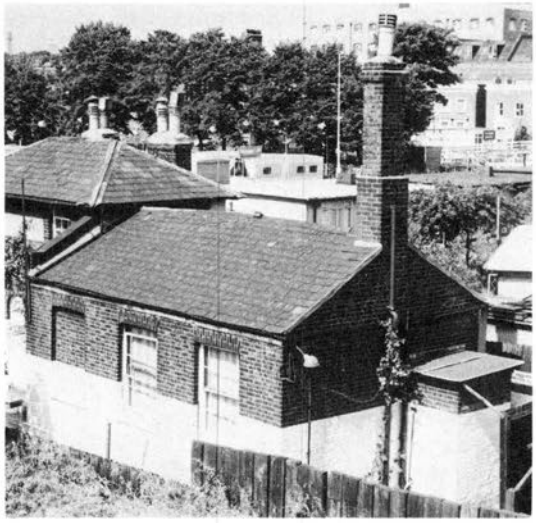
The 54 railways that had been built by 1843 looked, most of them, so promising (the London & Birmingham had paid 10% dividend one year) that there was a mad scramble to build more. While 37 lines had been promoted in 1844, a year later the figure was a wholly unrealistic 1,428, and the *Illustrated London News* of December 1845 gave a vivid description of chaotic scenes of depositing plans with the Board of Trade. Engravers and Lithographers were, it was stated, in so great demand that some hundreds had been brought in from Belgium. Small wonder that in this manic financial climate even the established lines found poor support for extensions. By 1848 no more investors could be found. In 1849 the West London directors took legal proceedings against the newly formed London & North Western Railway (LNWR) to get on with promised work, but though they won the case it was no help as a new trial was applied for. In the end it was referred to arbitration and an award of £4,550 was made (of which the GWR had to pay £1,750) but even this was not paid till 1854.

Over this period the canal continued to bring in a small revenue, but no maintenance work was done on it. Rubbish was dumped in it and by 1854 it was described as a danger to health and the cause of an outbreak of cholera in Fulham. For most years no dividends could be paid even on preferred stock, a liability amounting each year to £2,360. To add to the Company's troubles its Secretary, John Thompson, disappeared in December 1849. He had served the Company well and done much battle with the autocratic Saunders of the Great Western on the line's behalf, and had received a substantial gratuity from the directors. However, an audit found discrepancies in the funds he had administered. About £250 of the missing money was recovered from him but he fled to America in July 1850, and a deficiency of £928 remained on the Company's books until it was written off seven years later.

Periodical flooding put the line out of action at times when heavy rain swelled the Counters Brook and a high tide met it at the canal, and there is an old engraving (to be seen in Swindon Museum) oddly entitled 'The floods on the Thames Junction Railway enveloping an Extensive Steam Engine of the Company' and showing what is recognisably the 1844 locomotive impossibly submerged in floods with its train of trucks. In the 18 years of no passenger traffic the only other engine likely to have used the line were LNWR 2-4-0 'Crewe Goods' engines and the small 2-2-0 machines of Bury's design. (The GWR could not put engines on the line, as until 1860 its only access was by a small turntable intended for transfer of small goods wagons. The broad-gauge tracks were however kept in repair, and in 1848 served as a test track for a new broad-gauge steam rail-car built at the Fairfield works at Bow for the Bristol & Exeter Railway.)[27]

The LNWR made regular use of the line for goods traffic, and as early as 1844 had appointed two officials to manage this. Later the responsibility was transferred to the Manager of the Camden goods depot, who left on record a note of the interruption caused by the great flood on 15 November 1852 which damaged the West London line and left Kensington under 4ft of water.

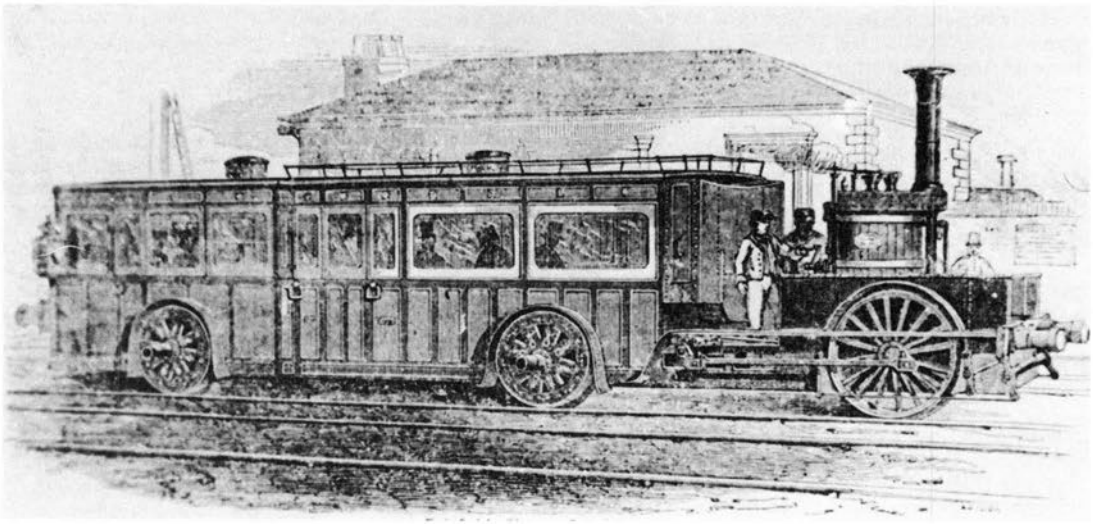
The level crossing was still proving a nuisance and its signals were dangerous. The break in the rails made for bad running by GWR engines at speed, though it did not affect the slow passage of the crossing trains. It may have been the roughness of the track at this point that had caused an accident to a

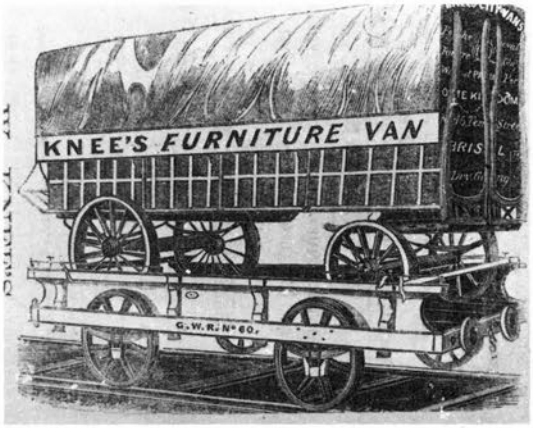


Above:
The West London Railway boardroom was built in 1844 as an annexe to the lock-keeper's cottage of 1828.

Above right:
Fairfield's steam rail motor for the Bristol & Exeter Railway of 1848 was tested on the WLR's broad-gauge metals. *British Railways*

Right:
Container traffic of 1850. A GWR broad-gauge truck carrying 'Knee's Commodius Spring Van'.





GWR engine as far back as 1839,[28] and there had been the collision in 1840. In 1844 a critical surveyor had warned of the dangers of the signalling system at that point.[29] After several near misses Saunders wrote sternley in 1851 to the West London directors about laxity in signalling.[30] so it was hardly surprising when a serious accident did occur. In November 1855 a LNWR goods train was being propelled southwards, brake van leading, down the cutting, through the tunnel and up the short rise to the crossing. The train was so long that the engine driver could not see anything at all of the GWR line or any signals. He was in the cutting on the north side still when the head of his train was on the crossing. A heavy GWR train of 68 goods wagons hauled by two engines was passing, and its head guard's van, marshalled just behind the second engine, was struck in the side by the guard's van of the crossing train. To make it worse, the LNWR engineman had no idea what was happening and continued to compress the debris before he stopped. The LNWR Guard was killed, and the GWR Guard, James Drake, so badly injured that he could never resume work. The underguard, John Macnaughton, was so upset by the accident that he never went on trains again and remained a porter for the rest of his life. Spurred on perhaps by this accident the two railways built a bridge to take the crossing's place 28 chains to the west. They had had powers to do this as early as 1846 but these had lapsed and a new Act had to be obtained in 1859 for the work to be done. The bridge was of brick, carrying a double line and rejoining the old alignment at a point 53 chains south of the level crossing. At the same time a short tunnel was made, through the approach embankment, for a GWR double mixed-gauge line which curved southwards and joined the line off the bridge at the brow of the hill at North Pole Junction. The north portal of the old aqueduct was bricked up, but the elegant south portal remained (though with much of its stone coping lost) until about 1906, later to be buried entirely by the widening of the GWR lines.

Even before these improvements the West London line was carrying a small but steady goods traffic. A slight working surplus most half-years enabled a little money to go to the shareholders from time to time.[31] Coal and goods traffic — particularly stone for the considerable building now going on in Kensington — not only continued but slightly increased.[32] In 1855 the directors were still trying to sell the line, but by 1858 it was decided that to do so 'was not expedient'. By now the people of Kensington began at long last to take an interest in the line they had so ignored 20 years earlier, and the local newspaper called for some progress, remarking that the railway 'capable of almost unlimited utilisation, had from the cupidity of its management or from supineness of the neighbourhood hitherto proved a miserable abortion'. With the Act of 1861 permitting the canal to be closed, work on the long promised extension line could now be begun.

1 The 7,500 issue was later reduced to 5,689 by forfeiture of 1,216 shares and 595 being merged in the Company. There was a further issue of 3,200 in 1840. Other issues are noted in *Railway Magazine* of 1849, pp547-550.

2 Earlier the Great Western Railway had sought permission to build on this route to a terminus at Vauxhall Bridge and later (in the face of opposition) at Brompton, but the Bill was rejected in 1833.

3 The bridge carrying the Hammersmith turnpike over the brook dated back to the 15th century and took its name from the Countess of Oxford who lived at Earl's Court. It was later renamed for the writer Joseph Addison who had lived nearby.

4 Early engravings show the aqueduct finished before there were any GWR rails, which places it before November 1837, and £12,276 had already been paid out for 'works' by the end of 1836. A full account of the works is to be found in the report of the half-yearly general meeting in March 1837 (*Railway Magazine* (Herepath) 1837, Vol 2, p225).

5 This was rather less than truthful, because Lord Kensington reported to the shareholders that he had 'gone over the line and found about 350ft unfinished as he approached the Birmingham line, and between the embankment of the GWR and the Uxbridge road there were 70 yards only'.

6 Many £20 shares were at this time only £3 paid up (*Railway Magazine* 1842, Vol 4, p998).

7 The pump to create the vacuum had a bore of 37½in and stroke of 22½in, and was rated at 16hp under the system used for beam-engines; the effective horsepower would be about three times this figure.

8 Brunel reported 'I found that the atmospheric pipe and the valve laid down and working under very great disadvantage from a bad line and sinking ground did nevertheless produce very fair results'.

9 Despite his father's views, Robert Stephenson made extensive study of the system. He pointed out that trains could only run at 15min intervals, and that all braking had to be done against full power, which was wasteful; also that there was no means of reversing a train if it overshot a station.

10 Sir Frederick Smith reported to the Board of Trade in February 1842 that 'the apparatus, being only worked now and then for an occasional experiment, is not in good order, for the embankment has sustained much injury from the weather, having sunk and slipped in several places, and the propelling tube is in consequence greatly distorted and out of parallelism with the rails'. In view of this, the results of the January 1842 trials would seem to be very creditable.

11 'Old Spinks' was evidently a tough railway character. Knocked down once by a passing engine he came back from hospital 'with a twist in his inside, not able to walk properly' only to be knocked down by another engine and survive that. When his station was closed, he remained as gatekeeper for the next 30 years.

12 The platforms planned were a long one on the north side of the up main line, a shorter one between the down main line and the third (goods) line, one between the third line and the station buildings, and one on the West London Railway side. (Details from contract plan, 1860).

13 The man working the more remote signal could not see the crossing at all and had to rely on seeing the intermediate signal. The crossing was not supposed to be used after dark.

14 Thompson asked 'if the GWR would pay a commutation in money by reason of the expense and inconvenience which will thereby be caused to the GWR company and the use of running-gear through the line of the GWR being abandoned on the Thames Junction Company'. (Letter, Thompson to Saunders, 21 September 1837.) It is odd that neither party seems ever to have referred to the quite specific prohibition of a crossing of this type in the original Act.

15 'The workmen employed on the Great Western line cut on Sunday last an open drain across part of the land belonging to the Thames Junction Company which caused the water to flow on to the Thames Junction lines. At what level is it intended to lay down the permanent rails?' (Thompson to Saunders,27 December, 1837.)

16 Upon protest the GWR agreed to notch the rails for crossing traffic, but only in 1844 was the proper track reinstated.

17 For this the railway bought Eynham Farm, kept 12 acres of it and sold the rest, stating that 'an immense income will be derivable from the land arising out of the vast number of sheep and cattle from Northamptonshire which would need a place of repose the night antecedent to the market' (BB&TJR Minutes, July 1839: PRO).

18 Odd though it seems to have a vineyard in London, this one had been providing a popular Burgundy since 1745. So good did it taste that the Empress Josephine (who surely had better vintages nearer home) was buying £2,600 worth of it in 1803.

19 Later there was an order to have the name of the railway 'affixed in composite letters against the front of the station in Kensington Road'. This must have been built by 1841 as it appears on a map of that date.

20 One of a batch of 0-4-2 engines numbered 60-69 on the North Midland Railway, No 67 had outside frames of iron and timber sandwich construction supporting boiler, smokebox and firebox by brackets. The firebox casing was of gothic shape, square in plan with steam space above in a bluntly pointed four-sided dome. The funnel is described as being very archaic, in two sections joined, and crowned with a spark-arrester in the form of a dished sieve on four

iron brackets, rather in the style of the famous *Puffing Billy*. The two cylinders, of 14 ×16in, were horizontal and the motion the old-fashioned 'gab' gear one. This was simply a reversing gear and afforded no opportunity of using steam with varying expansion rates, thus giving a fixed cut-off with no intermediate position.

21 The carriages were one first and third class combined, one third class only (these two from Messrs Wright of Euston) and one second-class coach noted as 'fitted with a brake'. Four goods wagons were bought at £86 apiece. The foregoing were all narrow-gauge, and four broad-gauge wagons were bought at £103 apiece from Messrs, Bury, Curtis & Co. Presumably these last were worked with the other stock as 'mixed-gauge trains' which must have been a highly chancy business, particularly with the engine pushing the whole train from the back.

22 In October 1844 it was reported that owing to an hour's hold-up, for a late running GWR train, no connection could be made for a Birmingham one, and 'a passenger was therefore obliged to be brought back to Kensington very much disappointed and dissatisfied and said he should hire a post-chaise at the Company's expense as there was no other train calling at Harrow that evening'. Another passenger, booked for an up train to Kensington 'had to walk to the GWR junction and got wet through'. WLR Board Meeting, 25 October 1844.

23 A contemporary writer (C. B. Andrews in *The Railway Age*) wrote of 'A passenger at last' on a not very much exaggerated vein:

'An omnibus suddenly pulled up at the Kensington & Wormwood Scrubs Little Western and No Junction Railway at 25min past 7 on Saturday evening last; the sensation created was immense. On the roof was observed a gentleman with a brown paper parcel; one porter in stupified amazement ran to the omnibus, the gentleman threw down his luggage and scrambling down demanded in a trembling voice if 'the train was gone'. Bewildered by the strange question the porter could not answer, but taking violently to his heels he ran over to fetch the Clerk. Five minutes afterwards a person in shirt-sleeves emerged from the public house opposite with a curl on his lip and told the gentleman he was the Clerk. The gentleman gave a convulsive twitch to his brown paper parcel and mildly replied that he wished to go to Bath. A cry was immediately raised of "Where's the stoker?", and a pot-boy out of place, having volunteered as Guard, was after a consultation of five minutes between the Clerk and the till despatched to Hammersmith for a half hundredweight of coals. The steam however was got up in less than 40 minutes, and at about half past eight the Special Train started with its one passenger for Bath. In the evening the office was lighted up with gas, and the Clerk invited the Conductor and Cad of the Omnibus to an elegant supper of Welsh Rabbits and cheroots, in commemoration of this event. The beer was of the best XXX.'

In fairness to the above improbable tale, it should be noted that the Railway did advertise in its timetable a 6.20pm departure for Wormwood Scrubs which connected with a down GWR train, the engine returning to Kensington at 6.50pm, when steam would have been dropped as it was not to be needed till the morning of the next day. I am indebted to the book *London Railways* by E. Course for this anecdote.

24 Prosser eventually demonstrated his line on Wimbledon Common, and later a short railway in France was so equipped.

25 According to Baxter's *British Locomotive Catalogue* Vol 3A, p21, the engine returned to the Midland Railway as No 67 and was renumbered 99 in 1848 and replaced in 1851, but if this was the case, some record of a payment to the West London for it should appear. It therefore remains something of a mystery.

26 The population of the Royal Borough was about 70,000 by 1861 and in the succeeding 10 years rose to 120,330. That others were looking at the growing suburb with an eye to its traffic potential was shown by the proposal in 1853 for a 'London Railway to afford direct communication between the City and Westminster and all the Western suburbs', in whose prospectus the West London line is marked as 'Abandoned at the time of the Panic'.

27 This was a small combined engine and saloon to carry 48 passengers, with a vertical boiler driving a dummy crankshaft connected by coupling-rod to the single driving wheels. It was named *Fairfield*, converted to normal boiler in 1851 and scrapped in 1856.

28 Daniel Gooch reported on 15 September 1839: 'The *Vulcan* burst one of her tubes — this so frightened the fireman that he fainted off the engine at the Thames Junction while she was running — he struck against the bridge and injured his skull. He is a little hunchbacked man, Isaac Robson by name. I sent him to St George's Hospital. I fear he will die.'

29 'The signals apply to the up and down lines simultaneously and in no respect possess the power of speaking to the trains or engine of a single pair of rails; neither was any caution signal made at the junction, an economy deemed to be most unwise.'

30 'The instructions which were agreed upon long ago for ensuring the safety of trains at the crossing are still in force . . . With every desire to afford reasonable accommodation for the traffic of the line, we must as a paramount duty to the public protect passengers from the risk of accidents by collision of trains crossing at the same time on a level with each other.' (Saunders to Thompson, 21 February 1851.)

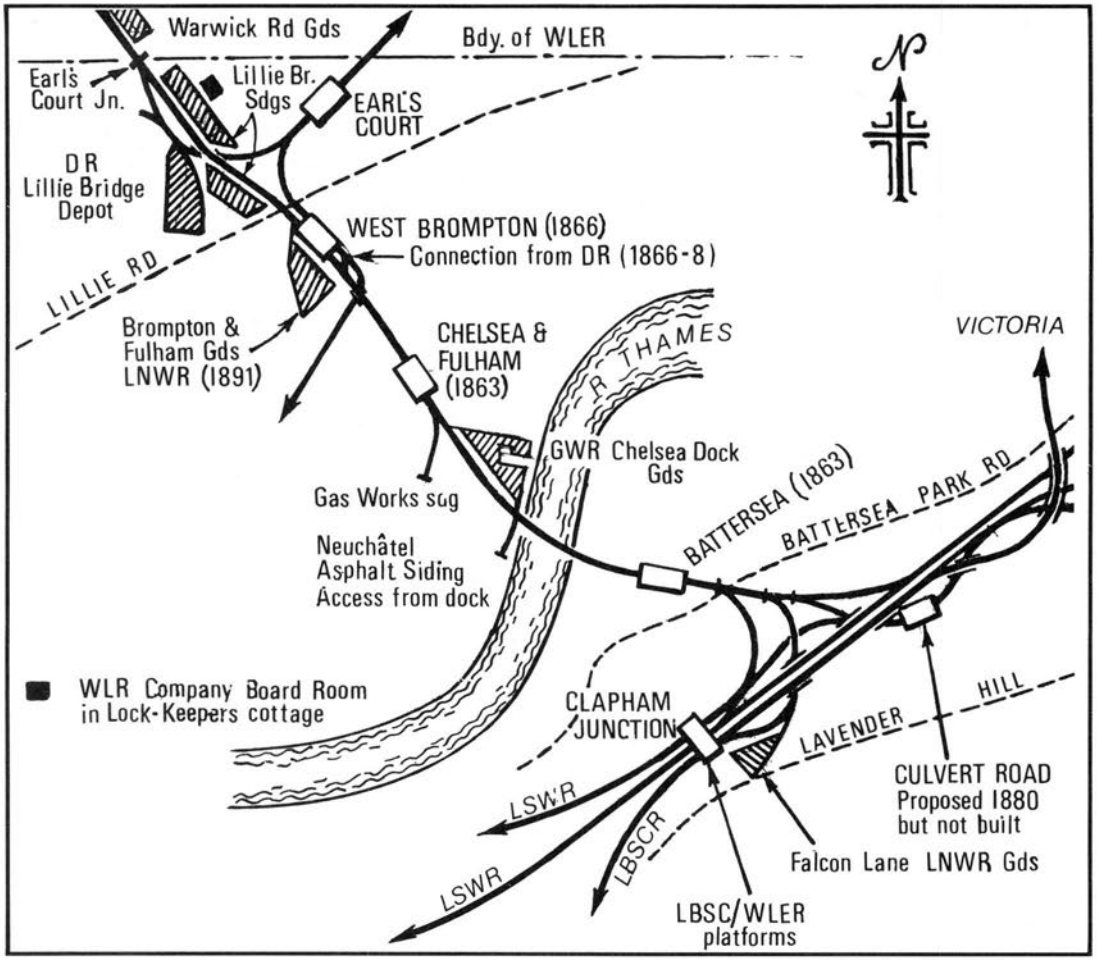
31 Some figures of half-year balances were £3,451 in 1855, £3,769 in 1857 and £1,614 in 1858. In 1857 a modest 2% dividend was paid to the first class preference shareholders.

32 14,832 tons on the canal and 5,120 tons on the railway for half a year in 1855, with receipts for the same period of £298,854.

2
First years of the Extension Railway: 1862-68

Ever since the GWR and LNWR had leased the West London's line the intention had been to extend it southwards, and plans for this were drawn up by the West London Railway, whose disillusioned shareholders however showed no desire to subscribe to the venture. The estimated cost was £300,000 and the resulting Act, of 15 August 1859, was only passed on the availability of capital from the two northern partners (one third each) and the London, Brighton & South Coast and London & South Western Railways (one-sixth each). The Act authorised construction of 'a railway length 4 miles 6 chains from a junction with the West London Railway at Kensington, crossing the Thames by a bridge, to a junction with the authorised line of the Victoria station and Pimlico line at Battersea.' Five additional works authorised were: 63 chains of connecting line to the West End of London & Crystal Palace Railway 'near its Clapham station; 35 chains of line to the London & South Western Railway near the junction of its Richmond branch with the main line; 27 chains of branch 'from the main line near the basin of the Imperial Gas Company to the Thames near the mouth of the Kensington Canal's lock in the Parish of Fulham'; diversion of part of the canal; as well as (not very specifically) 'a branch from Battersea to the South Western Railway'. The contract for the work was made with Messrs Brassie & Ogilvie for £138,514 9s 0d.[1]

Work began early in 1861 with the draining of the Kensington Canal and filling of its bed (which however the new railway did not entirely follow). The basin was left for extension of Warwick Road goods yard east of the new line, while part of the bed on the west side was given to exchange sidings later to be known as Lillie Bridge. The Railway thus did not use the old canal bridge carrying Old Brompton Road but built two small bridges east of it, then resumed the bed of the canal alongside Brompton cemetery. After passing under Fulham Road and King's Road the line could not make use of the canal bed any further and diverged west of it, leaving a stretch of



Left:
The Canal bridge of 1828 at West Brompton (on right) was taken into use by the Railway.

Above:
A General Map of the West London Extension Railway.

water known variously as Chelsea Creek or Bull Creek.

West of the line at this point was the Imperial Gas works, built in 1824 (in due course served by a siding) and the fine old house of Sandford Manor, dating from 1655 and linked by legend with King Charles II and Nell Gwynne.[2] At this point a line diverged to the east to run steeply into a newly built Chelsea Dock of the GWR, while the main lines rose on an embankment to cross the Thames.

The bridge there, spanning Battersea Reach at a point called the Backwater, was generally known as Cremorne Bridge from the name of the once-famous pleasure gardens below and their adjacent pier. It was designed by William Boker, Chief Engineer to the London & North Western Railway, and built in cast iron segments in the elegant style of other Thames railway bridges.[3] The track bed was built to broad-gauge dimensions at the extra expense of the GWR, though little use was made of the third rail after the first two years. (More than a century after its construction the off-centre configuration of the standard-gauge lines remained, and when I walked over the bridge in 1966 the retaining clips for the broad-gauge longitudinal sleepers were mostly still in place, and remained so till the whole bridge received new steel decking in 1969.)

South of the river the line continued, mostly on embankment or viaduct, first to cross Battersea Park Road and then to branch into three (later four) directions at a point known as Latchmere Junction; these lines served respectively (west to east) the LSWR line to Richmond, the London, Brighton & South Coast (LBSCR) Railway main line southwards, and the London, Chatham & Dover Railway; to reach this last, the line passed twice under the Brighton up lines to Victoria, first at Pouparts Lane[4] and again at

Longhedge Junction, where its metals were reached. Later (1865) a fourth line, known to engine drivers as the 'creep up spur' on account of its curvature and gradient, was put in from Latchmere Junction to connect with the lines of the London & South Western Railway to Waterloo. An additional station proposed, to be on the Longhedge line at Culvert Road, Clapham, was not built.[5]

The main (ie Longhedge) line, and the Brighton-side lines into Clapham Junction, were laid with mixed-gauge rails, which continued to the very end of the platforms in that station though there was no known service to use them there. Initially the new line had three stations — Chelsea, Battersea and Clapham Junction — and nothing could have illustrated more clearly the social distinctions of the time than the contrast between the first two. Chelsea station was solid brick and stone, with steel-framed platform canopies, and a wide drive-road and forecourt for the carriages of the gentry; Battersea was two wooden platforms on brick pillars from the sides of the embankment, with small wooden shelters and a single door straight on to the street below. Clapham Junction was the Company's own station from the start, a small two-platform building parallel to and south of the Brighton lines; it had its own clear approach under the lines of the two main railways.

Even as the canal was being filled in and bridges and stations were being built for the Extension line, one of the partners was already trying out the services which were to use it. In 1862 the LNWR began to run services from both east and west of the junction at Willesden — on the east from Camden in June, on the west from Harrow in November. Those from Camden had to reverse, running up on to the North & South Western Junction Railway's lines to do so and blocking both while the engine ran round its train. (The station at this point — the old West London Junction station — does not seem to have been used, as no passenger stop is shown). These services terminated at the (second) Kensington station, described by Neele, Superintendent of the LNWR, as 'the somewhat rough terminus on Kensington High Street'. They carried traffic to the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park, for which horse-drawn buses started from Addison Bridge, and the North London Railway also ran excursion trains over the route. The GWR coveted a share in this traffic, and in 1862 sent down a broad-gauge engine to test the track, only to have it repeatedly derailed.[6]

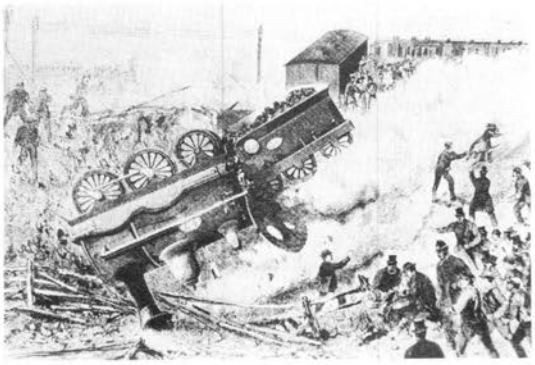
The West London Extension Railway was opened on 1 April 1863 and formed, along with the older line, the West London Joint Railways. The first Superintendent of the line (who had offices in Kensington station and was also Stationmaster there) was Samuel Grew from the LNWR, and he worked jointly with representatives of the other partners — Tyrell (Great Western), Scott (LSWR) and Turner (LBSCR). All four partners put the new line

immediately to use. The LNWR continued its terminating service from Harrow and added a Euston-Crystal Palace service, jointly with the LBSCR, which was to last for 12 years. The GWR started a Southall-Victoria service which, oddly, was both broad and narrow-gauge, seven trains a day narrow and three (one of which started from Reading) broad-gauge;[7] the narrow-gauge service was destined to last for 53 years. The same year the two southern partners began what was to prove the longest-lived service of all, a joint Brighton and South Western shuttle service between Clapham Junction and Kensington. This was to last 78 years a full-day service, and as a rush-hour one well over the century to the present day. Add to all these services the occasional North Western excursion from Harrow to Crystal Palace, a summer service from Kensington to Brighton, the growing exchange goods traffic for Lillie Bridge sidings, the local coal traffic and the GWR's effort to develop the handling of freight at Chelsea Dock, and it will be seen how quickly the Extension line began to justify its cost.

The year 1864 saw the same services, some of them increased in frequency with the ambitious addition of a through coach from Bristol; this was slipped from an up broad-gauge express about one mile short of the Bristol line's West London Junction and worked forward to Victoria, where it was advertised to arrive only 15min after the parent train reached Paddington — a timing that looks highly improbable. Needless to say the service only lasted five months.

In 1865 one service was withdrawn and two new ones added. The North Western ended its Harrow-Kensington run and in its place introduced a rather rambling service from Euston to London Bridge by way of Kensington, Longhedge Junction, Wandsworth and Waterloo.[8] This service was run jointly with the LSWR, which provided some of the carriages, and the South Eastern Railway, whose small tank engines worked to Kensington to hand over to the northern partner. It lasted from 1866 to 1868. The other new service was a GWR one making use of a new connection with its own lines by way of the Hammersmith & City Railway. This had been opened in the previous year, a joint Great Western and Metropolitan Railways' venture whose double, mixed-gauge lines were carried, mostly on brick viaduct, from Westbourne Park to the second of Hammersmith's five stations.[9] (It had been planned to continue to the Thames as the Fulham Railway, but this project was never pursued.[10]) A southbound connection was made from a junction on the viaduct (where later Latimer Road station was built) to the West London line at Shepherds Bush. It would seem that small temporary platforms were built at the foot of the spur just before the West London lines were reached; this was perhaps the result of the 'Memorial' signed by 400 inhabitants of the neighbourhood 'praying for the accommodation', but the Hammersmith & City Railway had to buy the land from the West London to build the platforms, and even then it is not clear that they were ever used.[11] Using this link then, the GWR started a servce from the Metropolitan's line (which itself had no running powers over the West London) at its original City terminus in Farringdon Road to Kensington where the large new station provided a bay of three mixed-gauge lines in its northeast corner. To this day this three-track bay between platforms is visibly wider than the corresponding three-track bay on the south side.

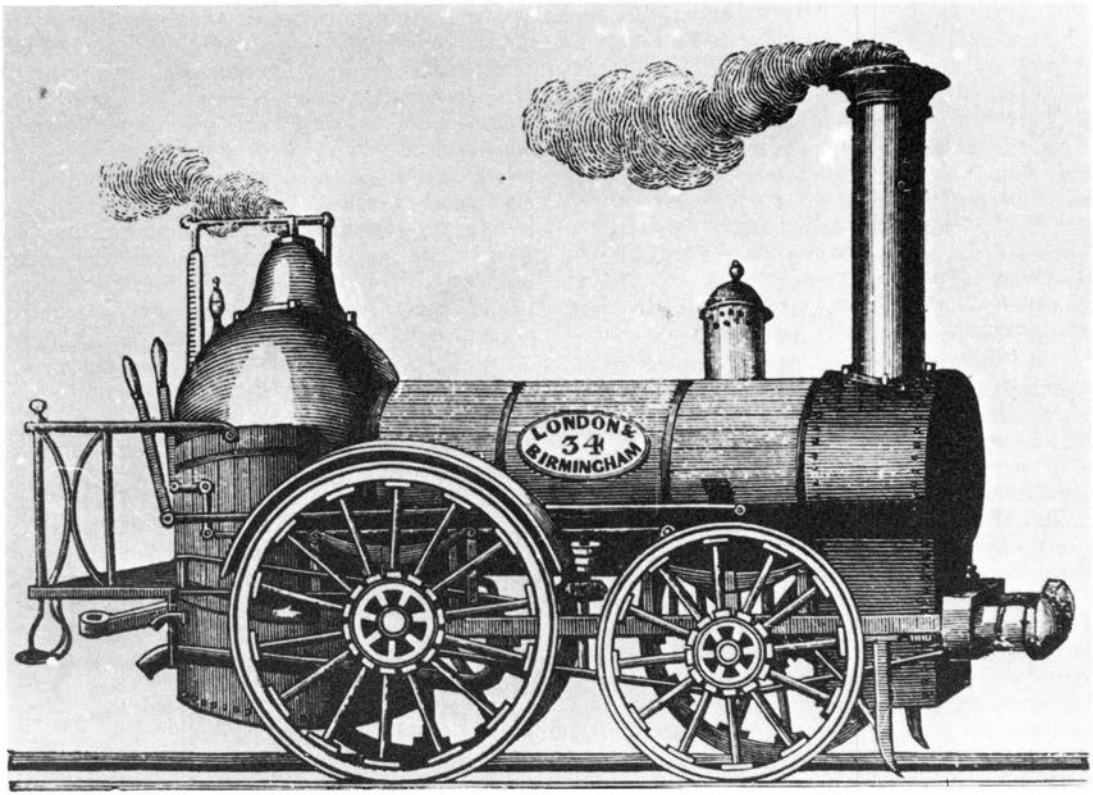
It is time now to look at the development of the stations along the original line, starting with Willesden. The first station, at Acton Lane, has been described in the previous chapter, and likewise the



Left:
Looking north along Bull Creek, a remnant of the Kensington Canal.

Above right:
Cremorne Gardens, the pleasure grounds served by the Railway at Battersea.

Right:
An accident at Poupart's Junction in 1868 ended with LBSCR 2-4-0 No 40 falling on to the West London Extension Railway (WLER) line. Note that the artist coupled the wrong wheels.



Above:
London & Birmingham Railway 2-2-0 No 34 of 1838; this type of engine was used in pairs on Kensington-Harrow services in 1865.

Right:
These stone sleepers from the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, used on the WLR in 1844, later found their way to the platforms in Shepherds Bush coal yard.

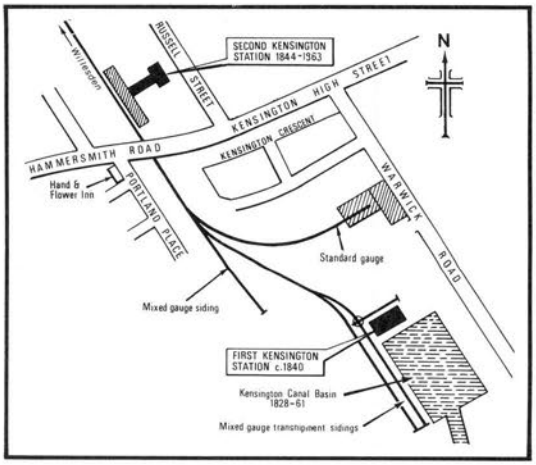
second — possibly uncompleted — station at West London Junction. This last certainly had no platforms in 1844, but the contract plan for 1860 shows four — three for the main lines and one for the West London; this last was realigned in 1860 for the new line to Mitre Bridge spanning the Great Western lines, the old line down to the tunnel being abandoned in the same year. Annexes were built abutting the station house on either side, but it is not clear how much use was made of the station. At any rate it was closed from 1 September 1866, being replaced by the third station, the new Willesden Junction further west. Trains from the east to Kensington still had to reverse — either into the old station or out from the new — but on 1 September 1867 a new end-on junction with the Hampstead Junction Railway was made with a bridge and platforms over the main line forming the high level station and a new short line to Mitre Bridge, where it

converged with the old (or 'low level') connection just short of the canal bridge.

There was at this period no station between Willesden and Kensington on the line (the GWR West London Junction station and the original Shepherds Bush station had both been abandoned), but the whole area was thinly populated.[12] At Kensington the first services had to use the inadequate platform of the (second) station by the road bridge, but by 1863 the third Kensington station was being laid out, an entirely new and very large one. This has a curious initial history. It was planned first to be built not north but south of Hammersmith Road, where it would have stretched from that road to Brompton Road, to both of which its platforms would have been connected by very long footways.[13] This perhaps accounts for the very long main platforms of the station as finally built — 1,100ft. Only the eastern part of the new station was built at first, the long through platform line being furnished with a 'scissors crossing' half way along it so that two trains could use it at once, getting in from or going out to the main through line. On the down side a similar pair of tracks had a similar double crossover, but later one link — down main to down platform — was taken out, leaving the track pattern as seen up to 1983. The up and down main lines were connected by a trailing crossover. Terminal bays on the east side had two platform faces and three lines, the centre one being an engine escape road. At each end of the through platform line were 'lay-bys' for locomotives.[14] The very broad spaces on the east side of both bays are described in the contract as 'carriage landings' and this is exactly what they were: a private carriage, on its railway truck at the rear of the train, would be unhitched by porters when the train came in, pushed by hand back to a small spur equipped with a turntable, turned at right angles and unloaded, by which time the coach-horses would have been taken out of their 'box' (and the dog out of the 'dog box') and the passenger would be away.[15] It could be added that these 'carriage landings' have reverted to the very same use a century later under the name of 'Motorail'.

All the through lines, and those of the northeast bay, were laid with mixed-gauge track, the southeast (and later the northwest) bay with standard-gauge only. The station building was wood faced with weather-boarding, but of adequate size, and incorporated booking office, waiting rooms, station-master's office, parcels office, and a refreshment room, together with a covered drive from the road for carriages and cabs. There was a ridge-and-furrow type canopy over the central part of the through platform and round the ends of the buildings, but the bay platforms were left open. There was a small yard-master's office in brick with pointed roof at the road entrance to the southeast bay.

The whole of the opposite side of the station was



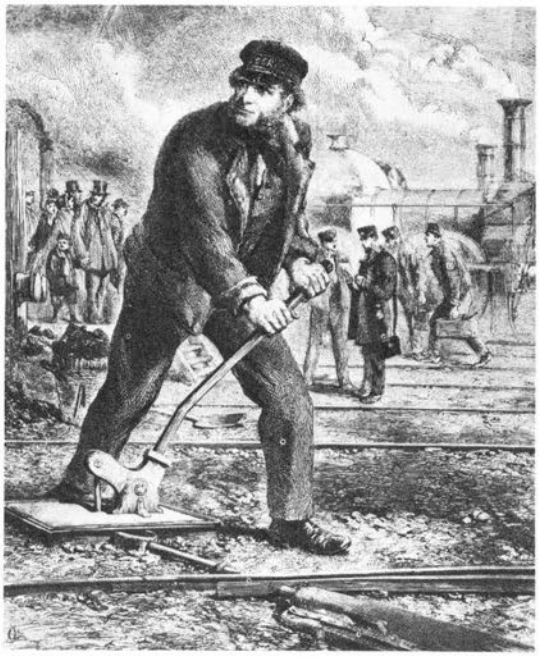
Top:
Kensington — the First and Second Stations, 1840-63.

Above:
Rescue operations in 1974 to preserve stone sleepers of 1829.

open country with the general name of Brickfield; the Royal Vineyard nursery occupied that part where Olympia now stands, and there were two small clay mills. The east side of the station was ready in 1864 and from 1 July the trains which had crowded the one platform at the bridge, often having to set back to reach it, could be accommodated in comfort at the new platforms. Moreover, the GWR's terminating service from the Metropolitan line could now be started. This service, whose City terminus moved east, first to Aldersgate and eventually to Moorgate, lasted four years on the broad-gauge and one more on the narrow. The broad-gauge trains were of very large eight-wheeled carriages known to railwaymen as 'Long Charley's'.[16]

It is appropriate here to describe some other types of carriage used in the variety of services that now began. Being for short-distance trains, they tended to be of the oldest that the parent company had, relegated main line stock. Thus the LNWR used former main line four-compartment coaches from the

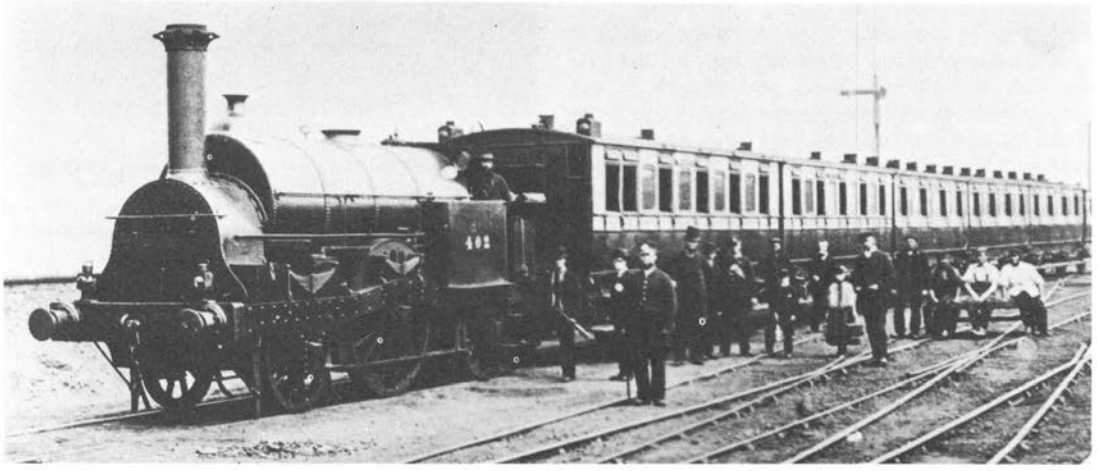
1850s, close-coupled in sets, second class reduced to third. The GWR had a variety of four, six and eight-wheeled stock. For broad-gauge use there were, in addition to the 'Long Charleys' already mentioned, six-wheeled carriages on the large wheels — 4ft in diameter — favoured by Brunel and carrying bodywork which varied from four compartments for first class to six for second, and a van-like interior with iron-clad walls for third. The narrow-gauge stock was four-wheeled with three or four compartments, and had a brake van to match. Many were faced with papier-maché, and one such survived as a toolshed in the West London carriage sidings

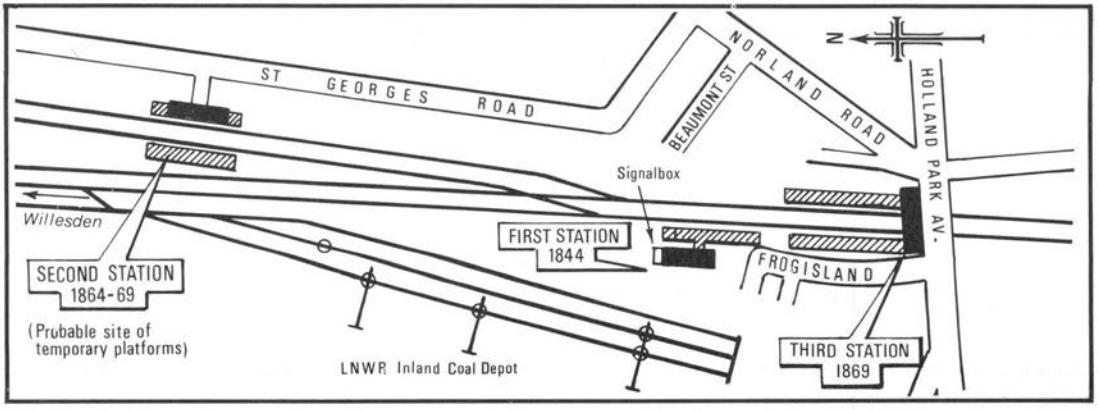


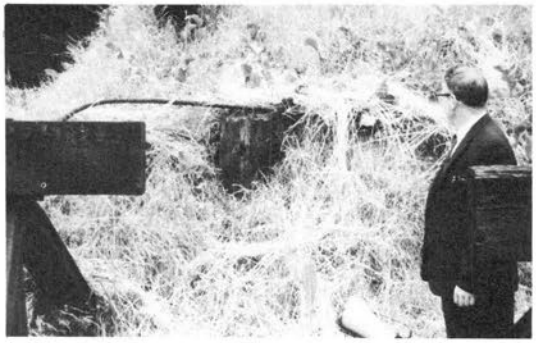
Right:
A Switchman in 1867 (from J. Gilbert, *The British Workman* — 1867).

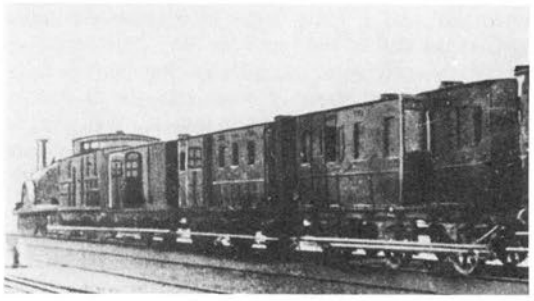
Below:
The LNWR 2-2-2WT No 402 of 1847, seen here on a local train c1860, was used on the line from 1862.
Bucknall collection

Bottom:
Stations at Shepherds Bush.









Top:
A broad-gauge buffer stop at Lillie Bridge in 1866, a century after use.

Above:
Seen c1863 is a GWR broad-gauge 2-4-0ST.

until 1940, while a similar brake van was to be seen, mounted on the plinth of the very first Kensington station, in Warwick Road goods yard as late as 1969, complete with dog box.

The carriages used by the Brighton line were highly variegated, including some third class four-wheelers converted from fourth class, with doors at each end and four windows in between and no partitioning at all. The LSWR alone seems to have used newly built stock here from the first, perhaps because it served a distinctly wealthy part of suburban London. For its joint services with the LNWR were used the latter's close-coupled sets of four-wheelers with four compartments apiece.

Turning back to train services, 1866 saw no major changes, though the experiment was made of dividing some of the Euston-Croydon trains at Kensington and working the first portion fast to Selhurst and the rear as before to Crystal Palace.

In 1866 a further station was built, named West Brompton & Lillie Bridge and opened on 1 September 1866. The station building was mounted on iron girders spanning the line, with its front facing on to Brompton Road at the bridge and a small driveway or forecourt. The station had two platforms, and a third line ran behind the down platform, later to serve a small goodsyard.[17] Also in 1866 (November) broad-gauge trains to Victoria gave place to narrow, and the third rails so expensively laid across the Cremorne and Grosvenor bridges went out of use.

Signals at this time were still of the disc-and-crossbar type, with fantail caution-boards. Their locations (surprisingly few for so large a station as Kensington) are marked on large-scale maps of the period. There were apparently no signalboxes at all at the station, the nearest being at Shepherds Bush for the junction there, but small concentrations of 'switches' are shown. These were at first worked by long levers beside the track, rather as tramway points were changed, but later by short, heavy levers which lay at ground level. These had weighted mushroom-like heads which had to be lifted, pulled over, and dropped on the other side, where their weight kept their setting secure. In accordance with current custom, the switchmen responsible received a bonus at the end of the year if they had never had a derailment. A few of these hand-worked switches survived in use in Addison Road station in the bay lines in to the 1930s, and I remember standing watching with some awe the strength demanded of the pointsman. The mixed-gauge junctions were complicated, but it must be remembered that where the central rail of three had to be changed (to bring the 'common rail' nearest to a platform face) this was not done by any form of movable switch but automatically by an arrangement of rails of considerable ingenuity.[18] The electric telegraph was introduced in 1863, at first between stations, later between signalboxes as they were built.[19]

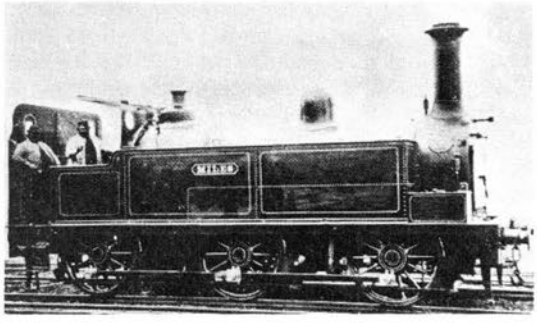
Continuing south, there were considerable changes in Warwick Road goods yard. The northern part remained much as in its canal-serving years, with mixed and narrow-gauge sidings, sharp curves and some 20 turntables, but the number of through goods lines was now four, while in the filled-in area of the canal basin itself was a solely GWR two-line goods bay built to broad-gauge only, with access from the south.[20]

Returning now to the services of the period, 1867 saw one new service — a LNWR one from Broad Street to Kensington (extended to Victoria from 1 January 1869) made possible by the new connection at Willesden with the Hampstead Junction Railway. This service was to last, though shortened to Willesden-Victoria five years later, for 50 years for passengers and over 70 for parcels traffic. Other changes the same year were minor — GWR abandoned its Southall-Victoria broad-gauge run and thereafter used on it narrow-gauge stock, reputedly some of the worst stock it ever possessed — the wheels were so large that passengers had to climb over them to get into some of the compartments. The LNWR and LSWR changed the southern end of their joint Euston-London Bridge service to Cannon Street. The Brighton line extended some of its Kensington-Clapham Junction trains to

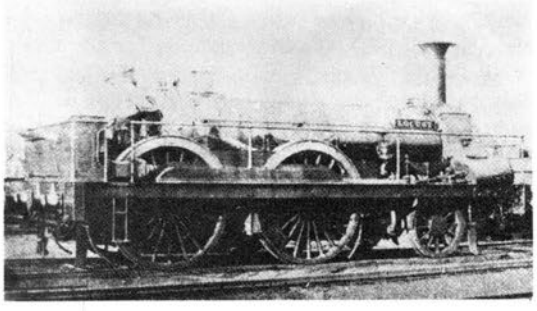
Selhurst and Crystal Palace, this time dividing them at Clapham Junction.

The following year — 1868 — saw yet another change of destination for the Euston-Cannon Steet trains, this time to Waterloo from the start of the year, but the whole service ceased a month later. The LSWR added a new service however, from Kensington to Ludgate Hill.

All these complicated services round the fringes of London seem to have drawn passengers, and Kensington station was getting impossibly crowded for its one through platform line, though the terminating services could be handled adequately in the bays. A start was therefore made on building the opposite half of the station, and the tender of J. Jay to do the work for £5,981 was accepted. The new station buildings however were smaller than those on the east side, from which they were separated by four tracks, spanned with a footbridge. No booking office was provided (this was added in 1871) and the work went on slowly and was in fact never completed; while the full length of the down through platform and a two-line northwest bay were completed, the southwest bay was left unbuilt save for some earthwork for a platform. It remained thus unfinished for some 80 years. There was no road access to the new buildings — this was definitely the 'unfashionable side' serving an area known inelegantly as Fulham North End. Other works were an engine lay-by at the north end and a fairly large locomotive turntable beyond the end of the nortwest bay. This turntable was of necessity quite complicated, having four lines of rail on it and short adjacent sections of double mixed-gauge. The whole station was laid with mixed-gauge rails except for the northwest and southeast bays. Four lines passed through the three arches of Addison Bridge, two of mixed gauge under the centre span, one of narrow-gauge through each side open-



Left:
***Miles,* the GWR broad-gauge 0-6-0T of 1866.**
Locomotive Publishing Co

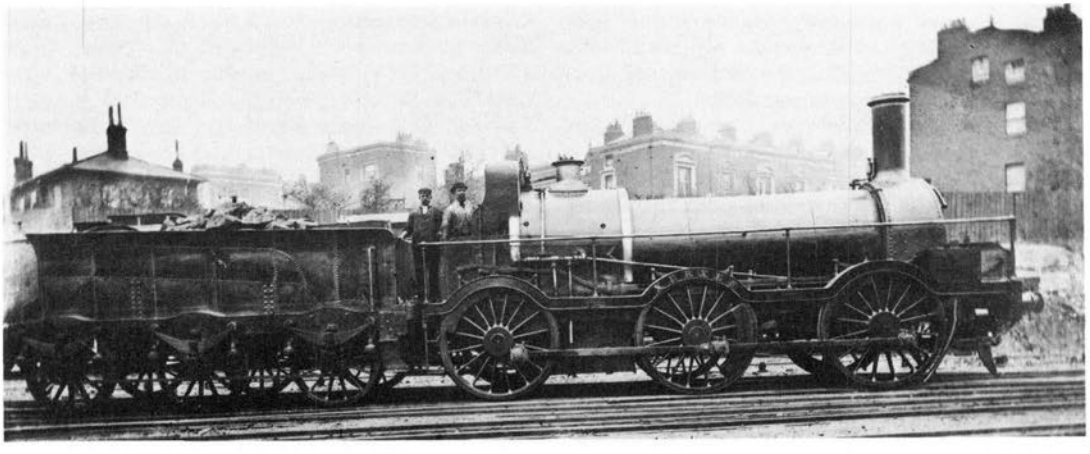


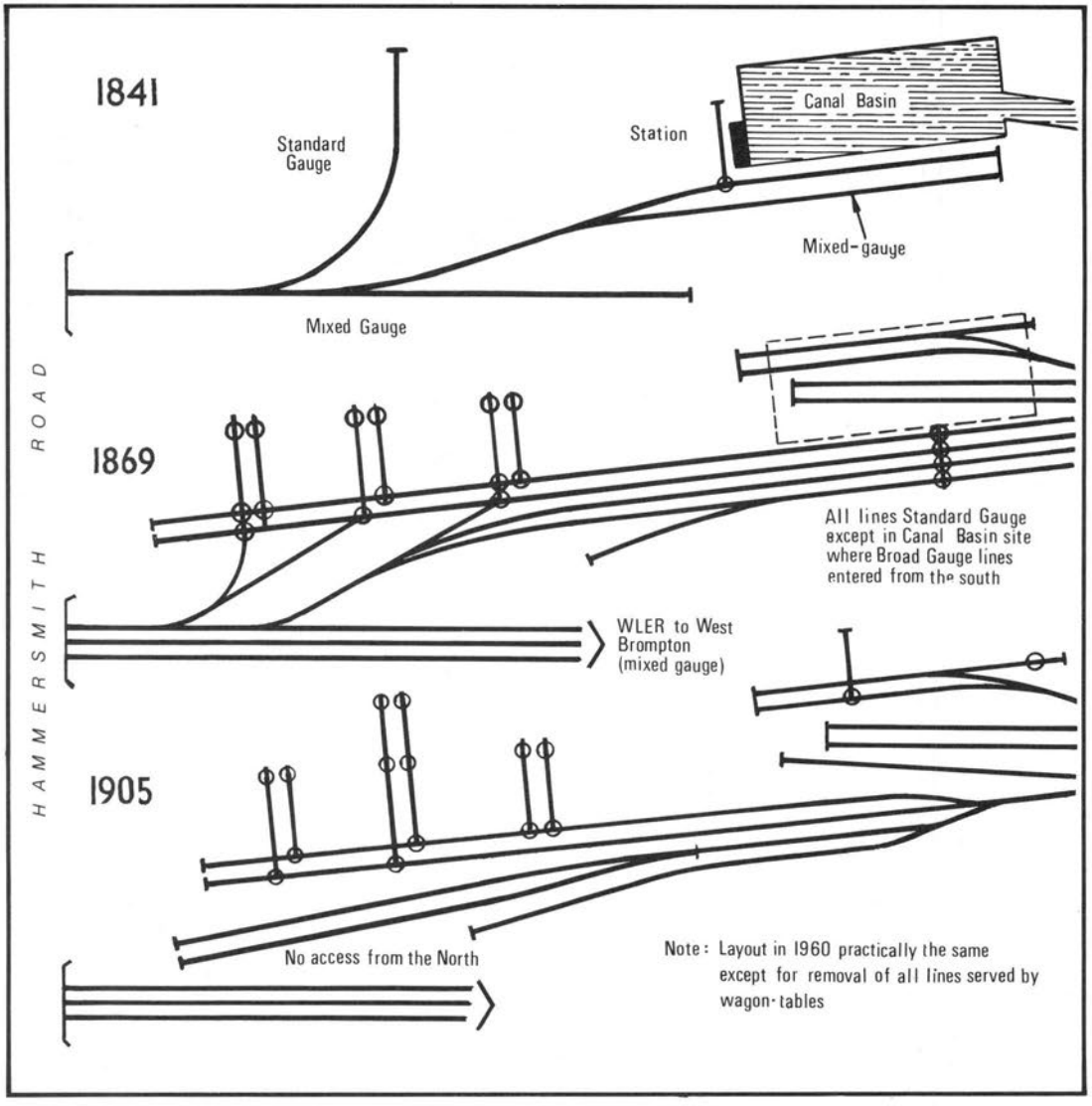
Below left:
A GWR broad-gauge 2-4-0T — *Locust* of 1862.
Locomotive Publishing Co

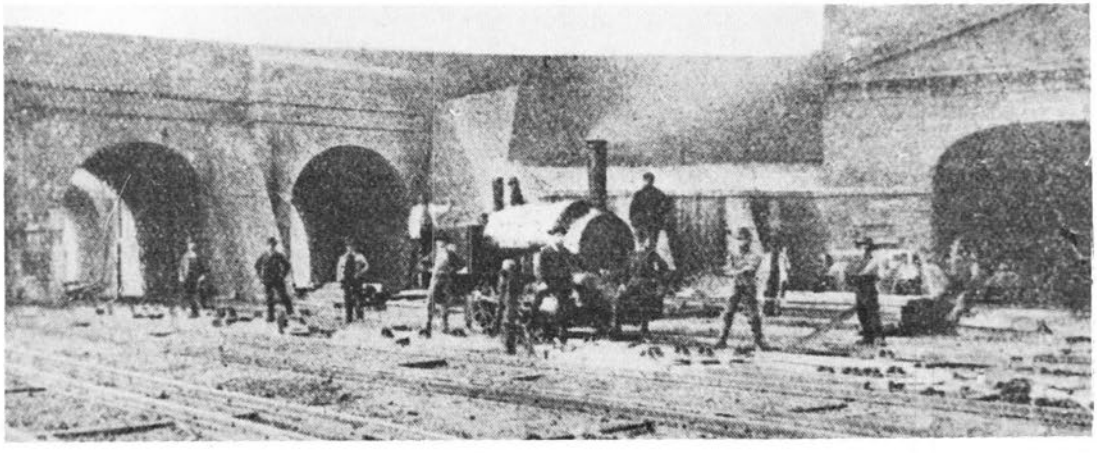
Below:
One of the last 'Caliph' class locomotives was the GWR's broad-gauge 0-6-0 *Xerxes* of 1863 as used on the line 1863-70. *Locomotive Publishing Co*

Right:
Warwick Road Goods and Coal Depot.

Below right:
The reconstruction of the GWR lines in 1873, and the brick bridge over them (seen through arches) which had been built in 1860. *GWR Magazine*



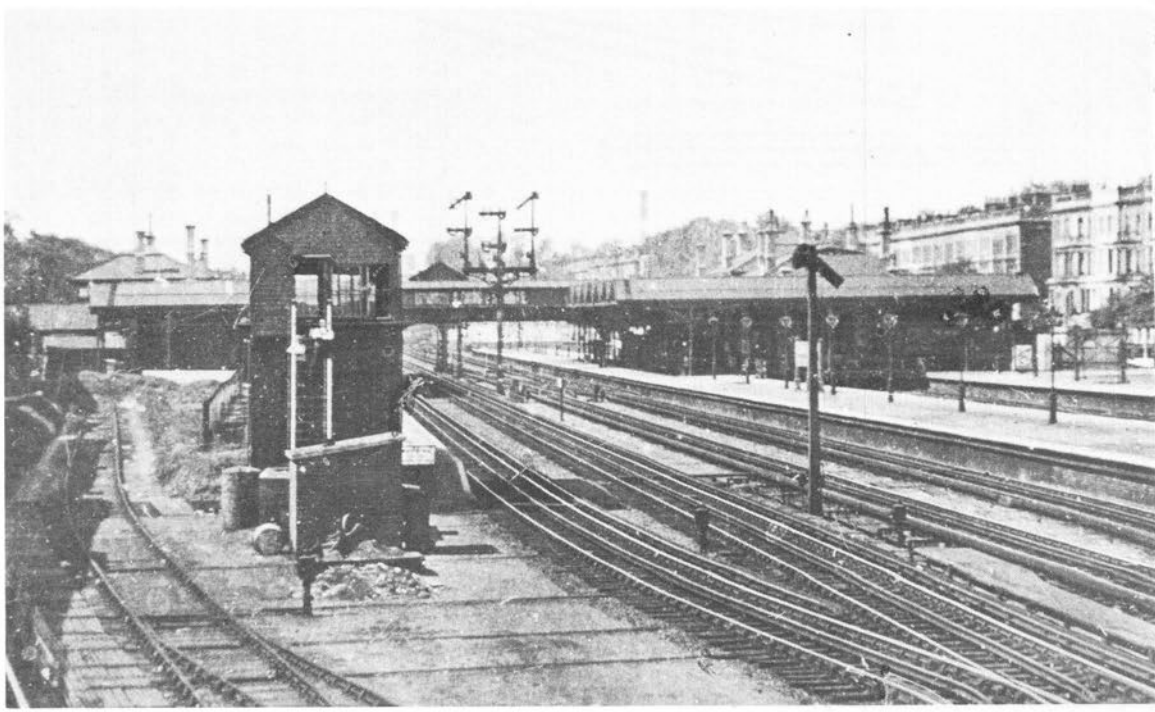

1841
Standard Gauge
Station
Canal Basin
Mixed-gauge
Mixed Gauge
HAMMERSMITH ROAD
1869
All lines Standard Gauge except in Canal Basin site where Broad Gauge lines entered from the south
WLER to West Brompton (mixed gauge)
1905
No access from the North
Note: Layout in 1960 practically the same except for removal of all lines served by wagon-tables



ing.[21] This then was the new (and third) Kensington station more or less in its final form; after 1868 it was named Addison Road, to avoid confusion with the Metropolitan Railway's new station at Kensington High Street.

Locomotives used on the line at the time must have been of fascinating variety, because the northern partners at least used their oldest and oddest engines for this unimportant branch of their systems. Thus one of the very earliest of railway historians, A. Rosling Bennett, noted seeing in the northeast bay in 1865 Harrow trains of the LNWR worked by ancient Bury 2-2-0 engines from the London & Birmingham Railway. The Burys dated from 1837, had been converted to tank engines and worked in pairs on this route.

Other types used from this company were 0-4-2 tank engines of 1860-62 for passenger trains, and for goods work 0-6-0 'Wolverton Goods' engines of 1854 and a few of Allan's 'Crewe Goods' 2-4-0 types from 1846 moved south to work from Camden sheds. Of GWR engines used, a little more is known. Broad-gauge 2-4-0 saddletank engines of the 'Stromboli' class (rebuilt from tender engines of 1841) were used in 1864, followed by the 'Metropolitan' class 2-4-0 saddletank engines built in 1862. These last were unusual engines in many respects. They had 6ft driving wheels, outside cylinders steeply inclined to clear the leading wheels, well tanks under both boiler and cab, and were the first to be fitted with condensing apparatus. Then in 1866 these gave place to six brand-new 0-6-0 tank engines of the 'Sir Watkin'



class, with very long side tanks. For broad-gauge goods trains 0-6-0 engines of the 'Pyracmon' class of 1847 and of the 'Caesar' class of 1851 were used, some of the latter being fitted with oblong buffers for mixed-gauge shunting.[22]

Of narrow-gauge engines used in this period those for passenger services were 2-4-0 tank engines of various types, including two taken over from the Birkenhead Railway in 1860; these, named *Volante* and *Voltigeur*, and later numbered 97 and 98, worked on the Southall-Victoria service from 1864 to 1867, and were stabled at the Longhedge sheds of the London, Chatham & Dover Railway.[23] Goods engines used were 0-6-0 engines of the '57' class of 1855 and of the '388 Standard Goods' class of 1866. South Eastern Railway engines appeared for a brief period on the three-company Euston-London Bridge service, most of 0-4-2 or 0-4-4 well-tank types. The Brighton company seems to have made use of any odd engine that would not fit anywhere else, but it had the advantage (over the northern partners) of working over a largely level road. The Kensington-Clapham Junction service was opened in 1863 by a pair of 2-2-2 tank engines numbered 19 and 4, the first dating from 1849,[24] and the Kensington-New Croydon service by several of a still older 2-2-2 class dating from 1847.[25] Also used were the mixed-traffic 2-4-0 class[26] and, for the extensive exchange goods traffic from Lillie Bridge sidings, the 0-6-0 classes of 1856 and later.

To the account of Brighton engines on the line at this period must be added the sad story of the six disputed engines; these were brand-new 2-4-0 engines with outside-frames and open cabs, built by Dübs of Glasgow and hauled to Lillie Bridge for routine handing over between 10 and 29 December 1866. There was a dispute over payment and the railway would not at first accept them and they stood forlornly till 1867, understandably losing much of their brasswork to looters. No 242 was eventually collected by the railway in March 1867 and Nos 243-7 in April. The incident illustrates the fact that there was a considerable traffic of new engines being delivered by their northern builders to the Brighton, South Eastern, and London, Chatham & Dover Railways, amounting in the period 1863-68 to at least 130 locomotives.[27]

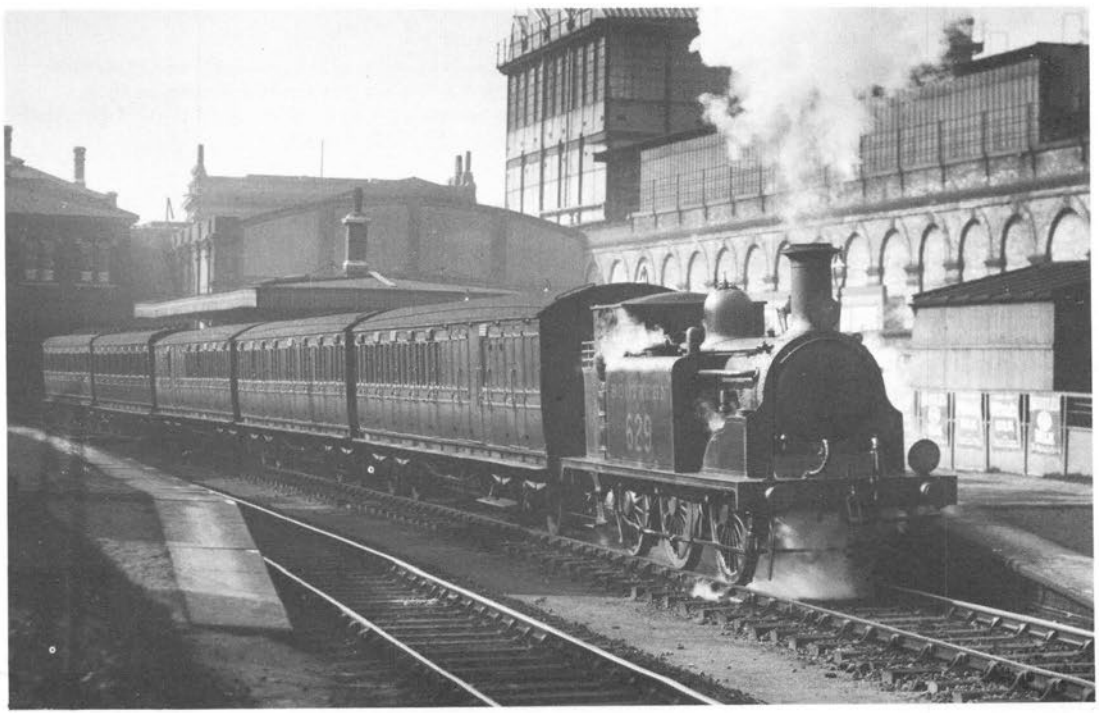
Alone of the four partners, the LSWR had no

Above left:
This photograph of 1929 shows the east side buildings (completed in 1864) of Kensington station, and some special traffic.

Left:
The west side buildings of Kensington station were completed in 1869; the posts marked the private road.

Below left:
A general view of Kensington station, taken with the author on the steps of South Main signalbox in 1921.

Below:
West Brompton & Lillie Bridge station, built in 1869 and LBSCR 0-4-2T B629 of 1876, seen in this photo of 1933. *Madgwick collection*



goods traffic over the line and its sole concern therefore was suburban passenger service and — again uniquely — it seems to have contributed not its oldest engines but its most up-to-date ones designed specially for the work — Joseph Beattie's famous 2-4-0 well-tank engines. Painted in chocolate brown, with brass domes and fittings, they must have been among the most elegant machines to be seen on the line.[28] The LSWR was at this time spreading its lines to serve the prosperous small towns of riverside Surrey, and now cast an interested glance at the growing suburban towns on the north bank of the river — Hammersmith, Chiswick, Turham Green and Gunnersbury. An Act was secured in 1864 for a line from the West London Railway to Richmond by way of Hammersmith, Gunnersbury and Kew, the major work being a new bridge over the Thames: this was started in 1865 and took most of three years to complete. From Kensington the line started with a cutting opposite Addison Gardens, curving under Shepherds Bush Road and under the Hammersmith & City Railway to climb to a new station called Hammersmith (Grove Road) and go on westwards to Gunnersbury.

Thus the end of 1868 saw the West London Railway and its Extension line in full use and on the threshold of further connections and services to a newly growing London which was absorbing its peripheral villages almost as rapidly as railways could be built to serve them.

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1 The contract, beautifully written on parchment and bound in tooled green leather, goes into great detail. The major item was of course the Thames Bridge at £87,219 3s 6d. Other bridges were Fulham (£2,101 19s 0d) and what is described as 'Richmond Road Bridge' (£1,592 2s 6d). — this last probably the extra arches for Old Brompton Road, as the old canal bridge here was unsuitably located for the main line. Another item was 'Ballasting, £4,485, 10s 0d' — a relatively expensive item; after so much bad experience in the quality of embankments and ballasting at Wormwood Scrubs, the railway now made very specific conditions, stating that 'the soil must be uniformly laid on the thickness of six inches and sown with Rye grass and clover seeds as soon as the proper season will admit of this being done, and not less than 45lb of seed to be sown on each acre'. The 75-page document is accompanied by beautifully engraved maps and certainly justifies the last entry in the list, which reads 'Lithography, £12 10s 0d' (PRO RAIL/732/34).

2 Sandford Manor was built 1655-60 and reputed to be a dallying-place for Nell Gwynne and Charles II (the King could come up by boat and avoid the gaze of the vulgar citizenry). It later served successively as gunpowder factory, clothing store and canteen for soldiers in the Napoleonic wars, before becoming a staff house for the gas company in 1824. The gas company (or rather its successors) named their two small green shunting engines *Nell Gwynne* and *Charles 2* after the legend

3 Cremorne Bridge was 1,020ft long with six arches of 120ft span over the water giving a headway of 20ft above high water mark, and seven approach arches of 25ft span.

4 Named after Samuel Poupart, who in 1807 founded a market garden and fruit-growing business at that point.

5 The Land Development Co offered to pay £750 towards the cost of a station at Culvert Road, Clapham, and guarantee losses up to £800 per year for three years, with a condition that the level crossing at Pouparts Lane was to be closed. The offer was not accepted (mainly on the objection of the London, Chatham & Dover Railway — though this line was not a partner) but the crossing was closed and a footbridge built in December 1880, later widened in June 1891.

6 'It was made known to the Directors casually upon the trial of a broad-gauge engine some few days ago over a portion of your line north of the Thames, that the engine would not work through some of your crossings and switches of that line, in consequence of which the orders were given for a more general and more minute examination of other portions of the railway company.' (Letter, Saunders to Bellamy, 2 August 1862).

7 At Victoria GWR trains first used a temporary wooden station just east of that of the Brighton line, but moved to the London, Chatham & Dover station when that was completed in 1867.

8 The route continued through the heart of Waterloo station on a single line that crossed Waterloo Road by a steel bridge (which still survives as a footway) to join the South Eastern Railway at Waterloo Junction station.

9 The five stations of Hammersmith were those of the North & South Western Junction Railway in 1858, Hammersmith & City in 1864, LSWR in 1869, District in 1874 and Piccadilly in 1906.

10 The line was to have crossed Great Church Lane near Fulham Union Workhouse and end in Town Meadows opposite the distillery.

11 Evidence of the construction of this temporary (1864-9) station is mainly that of maps of the period, which clearly show two platforms and an approach road to St George's Road (later Swanscombe Road) in 1867, but no station buildings are shown. It would have been abandoned when the new station — Uxbridge Road — was opened on 1 November 1869.

12 Contemporary maps show Wood Lane in existence but with no houses save for a keeper's cottage and a rifle pavilion, while Latimer Road had a few terrace houses backing on to the railway.

13 The tender plan shows how the station would have occupied almost the whole of Warwick Road depot and most of the Lillie Bridge sidings site. The layout was to be roughly the same as that eventually built on the north side

of Hammersmith Road, with the minor alteration of providing a lay-by at the north end of the up main platform reached not from the north but by a back-spur from the up platform line, probably so that an engine could come on to the back end of a train which was being reversed without fouling the through lines.

14 These 'lay-byes' were long enough for three engines of the period and were furnished with water-cranes. They were not signalled, but egress was blocked by a substantial iron clamp known as a 'scotch', worked at first by switchmen and later by the signalman from the nearest signalbox.

15 The habit of travelling in one's own coach lingered for many years, perhaps for the prestige it implied. The Duke of Wellington, who travelled a lot between London and Reading, would never leave his carriage but sat in it, loaded on a truck at the back of the train, in what must have been considerable discomfort.

16 The 'Long Charleys' were GWR ex-main line stock on eight wheels (rigid, not bogies) built in 1852, just under 40ft long. In 1863 six of them had been fitted with gas lighting for use on the Metropolitan line, something of a luxury as the ordinary method was by oil lamps in the roof. These gave so poor a light that for many years the railway station bookstalls sold candlesticks to be clipped on to carriage windows for reading, a considerable fire hazard. Smoking was strictly prohibited in trains, and even on stations, up to 1870. Thirty-nine more of these long coaches were built, with oil-lighting, and provided stock for the Kensington service.

17 The Act of 1864 incorporating the Metropolitan District Railway had included provision for a physical connection south of West Brompton station between the two lines for passenger services, but this was never implemented, though a temporary connection was put in for contractor's trains to dump soil from the District Railway's many cut-and-cover works of the time. This was removed in 1868, and terminal passenger services started in April 1869. The island platform, intended for joint use, was shared amicably until about 1880, when the District southward extension to Putney came into use; in that year the West London Extension Railway boarded off access to its half of the platform, appropriating the waiting room for its exclusive use.

18 The outer rail was left undisturbed, the diverging rail not quite touching it but leaving a gap for a wheel-flange to pass through on a broad-gauge train. The corresponding wheel of a narrow-gauge train was forced off the outside rail and across the gap by means of a sturdy check-rail dragging at the wheel on the other end of the same axle and forcing the whole axle on to the new path. The changeover had therefore to be done quite slowly, but in entering and leaving a station this did not cause any problems. Through lines, not serving a platform, were not affected and could be used at normal speed.

19 The system is described as 'four wires and single-needle instruments for train telegraphing, and double-needle instruments for "talking".' These evidently gave good service, for the last single-needle instrument was only replaced in 1918.

20 Entry to the LNWR depot was still from the north. A feature of the old single line had been the absence of running-round facilities at any point, trains being pushed down from Willesden in a somewhat perilous manner. Both Shepherds Bush and Warwick Road 'inland coal depots' had therefore to be entered from that direction.

21 The easternmost line under Addison Bridge served only the narrow-gauge southeast bay but appears to have had the third rail laid for a short way south of the bridge. Perhaps this served as a shunting spur for the Warwick Road sidings, the nearest line of which was a mixed-gauge one. Similarly the western-most track seems to have been of mixed-gauge south of the bridge, but it did not lead anywhere.

22 Broad-gauge wagons seldom had brakes. They were controlled from a guard's wagon with a large brake handle protruding through the floor and filled with stones as ballast, the guard lying on a litter of straw on the floor. When couplings broke there were many 'wild runs'.

23 These were small side-tank engines built by Robert Stephenson in 1856.

24 No 19 was a 'Sharp single' of 1849 (converted in 1860 in to a well-tank engine) and worked the branch for the six years 1863-9. No 4 had started life as a 4-4-0 tank engine at Brighton in 1861. It was almost immediately rebuilt as a 2-2-2 saddletank engine with outside cylinders, in which form it worked on the branch. In 1868 it was laid aside at Battersea after a minor accident had damaged the front end, and reappeared on the line rebuilt as a 2-4-0 tank engine, later to be named *Lewes*.

25 These were 2-2-2 engines built by Fenton & Co in 1847 and numbered 61-70, and were among the last to have polished mahogany lagging on the boiler. This was afterwards painted over in alternate green and red stripes and must have looked hideous, though by the time the engines worked on the West London lines the boilers had been sheeted over with iron and painted green.

26 These 2-4-0 mixed-traffic engines were intended for the Rhenish Railway in Holland but the Brighton company bought them and used them on general duties in the London area. It was No 40 of this class that fell off the embankment at Poupart's Junction, on 10 February 1868, finally lying upside down on the line below.

27 From various northern builders came 44 engines for the Brighton company, 42 for the South Eastern, and 44 for the London, Chatham & Dover Railway. The new engines were usually hauled 'dead' by LNWR engines to Lillie Bridge sidings for handing over. As well as new engines passing this way there were occasional transfers of much older machines upon sale or hire. Thus an old 0-4-2 engine of 1844 from the Manchester & Birmingham Railway named *Trent*, bought by Boulton of Ashton and hired out to contractors passed over the line in February 1866 on its way to Dartford.

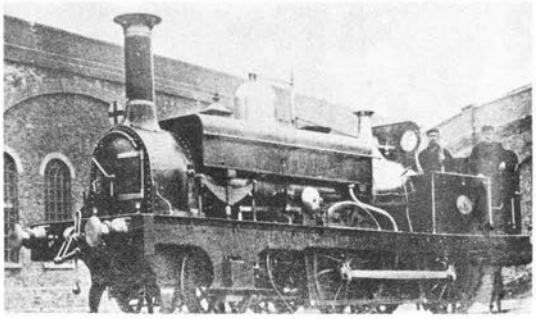
28 These 2-4-0 well-tank engines were built to Beattie's design by Beyer, Peacock & Co with 5ft 6in wheels. Some similar engines with 5ft wheels had been built at Nine Elms in 1858 and these shared the workings.

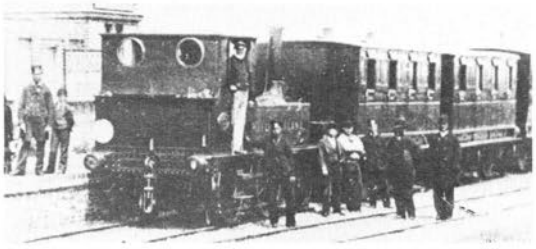
3
Additional Connections and Expanded Services: 1869-99

The next 30 years saw a steady increase in facilities and expansion of services on the West London Railway network. Two new connections with other lines were made, two stations were added and Addison Road station doubled in size; a choice of routes round London offered which would be welcome at the present day. All this coincided with — and contributed to — the rapid urbanisation of the land between Kensington and Hammersmith, and later to the siting in this new housing area of various places of amusement or recreation, of which the best known are the White City, Olympia and Earl's Court. All this new housing meant too an enormous demand for household coal, inland coal depots for which were soon covering the whole district. To five such depots on the West London line must be added two more for Hammersmith (North & South Western Junction Railway and GWR) and two for Kensington (odd intrusions of the Midland Railway), the railways concerned being responsible for paying the Coal Dues.[1] The horse-drawn coal cart, with its rows of stiff black buckram hundredweight coal sacks to be tipped through circular holes in the pavement to every house, was a daily feature of the streets well into the 20th century. The last three decades of the 19th century also saw the innovation of country milk delivered overnight and wheeled round the streets in churns in the morning, a traffic of which Addison Road station had a very large part.

The two new lines were to Richmond (described in the last chapter) and to Earl's Court Junction for the Metropolitan District Railway. The Richmond line went into use at once, but the District connection was at first only used for removing spoil from tunnelling, and was slightly relocated three years later to ease the gradient before being used for passenger trains.[2] It was used from February 1872 for what came to be known as the Outer Circle from Broad Street to Mansion House, and from August for the Middle Circle from Moorgate to Mansion House.

The Earl's Court Junction line was connected 35





Below left:
The abandoned buildings of Chelsea station in 1954.

Top:
This LBSCR 2-4-0WT, No 4 of 1862, worked the Clapham Junction service 1863-68. *Bucknall collection*

Above:
After working on the line from 1869 to 1872, this 2-4-0T, No 96, of the LBSCR was transferred to Hayling Island, where it was photographed. *Bucknall collection*

Below:
Another photograph taken after the subject had moved from the line was of the LBSCR's 2-4-0T No 53 (which worked on the line 1872-75) at Newhaven.
Bucknall collection

chains south of Addison Road station on the west side of the line, under which it then passed in a cutting through the bed of the Counters Brook, which has caused occasional flooding ever since. The two new stations were Uxbridge Road and Wormwood Scrubs.

Uxbridge Road, the new station built to serve Shepherds Bush, was a substantial brick building on the overbridge with two entrances to the street (later changed to a single central one with small shops on either side) and a glass canopy covering them. Wide covered stairs led down to each platform in the cutting, and a later addition was a footbridge over the lines at the northern end of the platforms, to give a covered way to the White City. The station was opened on 1 November 1869, and the building at street level survived for 99 years to 1968.

The other new station, Wormwood Scrubs, was a simple wooden structure of two platforms on brick pillars rising out of the sides of the embankment, and was opened on 1 August 1871. The area was a sparsely populated one, but it did include a 'People's Garden' near Old Oak Common used for political meetings, and there is a record of feelings running so high (this was during the Franco-Prussian war) that knives were drawn at the station. In 1891 the station was relocated slightly to the north, and after a further 11 years the GWR, which had not paid anything towards the building of the station, was first allowed to use it. The name was later changed to St Quintin Park & Wormwood Scrubs and the station remained in use until destroyed by bombs in 1940.

The completion of the west side of Addison Road station was described in the last chapter. It was opened on 1 October 1869, though not given road

access or a booking office for the moment, as it served little but open fields.[3] Its function for the moment was to relieve pressure on the east side platforms, though the station restaurant (which was on the east side) suffered a drop in trade in consequence.[4] Not that the refreshment room seems to have been very well run, for in 1872 Samuel Grew the Stationmaster resigned on account of illness caused (he alleged) by 'decaying vegetables, scraps, mud, hogwash, etc, from the Refreshment Rooms, the place being literally used as a Miskin'. I am not quite sure what a Miskin was, but it sounds daunting. Partly to blame though was the notorious dampness of the whole area which was a black spot for rheumatism.[5]

A considerable length of broad-gauge rail seems to have been left in place at Addison Road station though not used; thus the section southwards from Chelsea Basin Junction, officially abandoned in November 1866, was still in place seven years later. A report by the Superintendent of the line, dated 9 April 1873, states 'these rails are laid on the West London from North Pole Junction to Long Hedge Junction, also on both through lines from the north end of Kensington depot (at the junction of the main line) to Lillie Bridge, and on two blind sidings at the latter place'. These sidings were probably those nearest to the main line; more than 90 years later, walking along the line with an Inspector, I delved behind the modern buffer-stop and uncovered from the long grass the three vertical sleepers driven into the ground that had comprised the mixed-gauge buffers there, the broad-gauge buffer blows of a century before clearly imprinted in them.[6]

Throughout this period the legal position of the West London Railway was somewhat unclear. The Act for the Extension line clearly envisaged its absorption but nothing seems to have been done to

implement this, and thus the old railway, which had had on its Board such distinguished names as those of Sir Daniel Gooch of the GWR and Sir Richard Moon of the LNWR continued a theoretical existence for some 113 years before extinction upon railway nationalisation.[7]

Turning now to train services, 1869 saw many changes. Retained were the GWR's Southall-Victoria and Moorgate-Kensington services (the latter narrow-gauge after mid-March), the LNWR's Euston-Croydon service, the LSWR's Kensington-Clapham Junction, and the Brighton's trains to Clapham Junction and Crystal Palace daily and to Brighton in the summer.

Added to these were two important new services — that of the LNWR from Broad Street to Victoria (an extension of the Addison Road service of 1867 already mentioned) and that of the LSWR from Ludgate Hill to Richmond by way of Hammersmith and Brentford Road. The fact that so circuitous a route as the last could be profitable (it lasted for 47 years) shows how very poor any alternative transport by road must have been until well into the 20th century.

There were no changes in the next two years save the withdrawal of the GWR's Moorgate service in 1871, but 1872 saw several additions making use of the new District Railway link. The LNWR Outer Circle (from 1 February) and the GWR Middle Circle (from 1 August) started running over the District line to Mansion House, from Broad Street and from Moorgate respectively.[8] All previous services were maintained, but the service from Victoria to Broad Street was shortened (1 February 1872) to start from Willesden. There were no major changes in 1873 or 1874 save for the withdrawal of the summer service to Brighton, and a slight reduction of frequency of the Southall-Victoria service.[9]

An altogether odd item to be seen on the railway at this time was an experimental steam tram, demonstrated by its inventor, Grantham, at Lillie Bridge in 1875. Its first trial, upon lines laid in a field nearby, was unsatisfactory as the ground proved too soft for its weight, but on 14 April 1875 permission was given for it to run on the good track of Lillie Bridge sidings, where it performed so well that it was bought by the Wantage Tramway, which ran it till 1890. It was a four-wheeled double-deck vehicle with two vertical boilers in the centre and open stairways at each end, and weighed about $6\frac{1}{2}$ tons.[10]

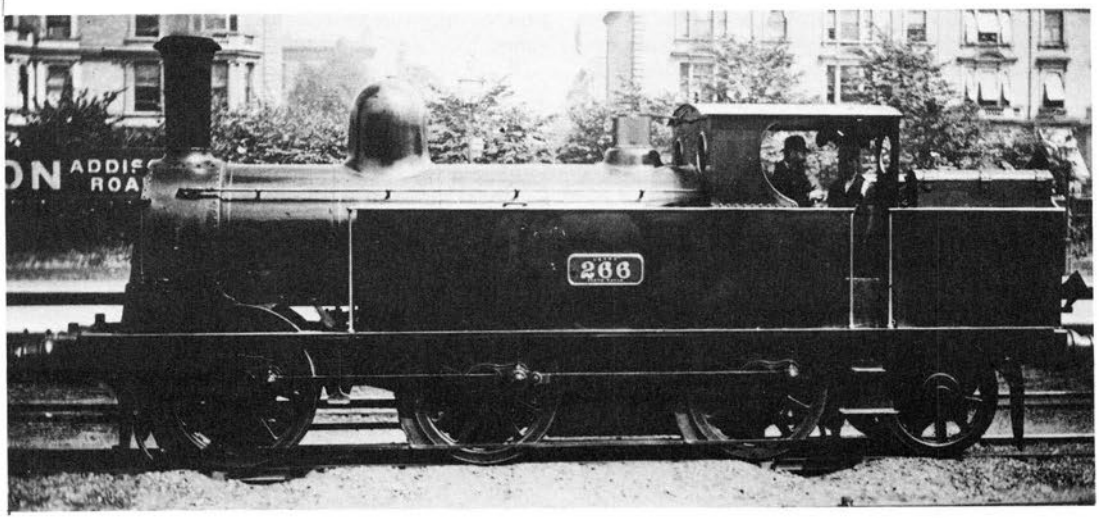
In 1875 a GWR service was added from Henley to Victoria, though only for one year, and the LNWR service from Willesden to Waterloo was resumed on 1 July. Minor extensions were of the Euston-Crystal Palace service to Croydon, and of the Middle Circle's City terminus to Bishopsgate.

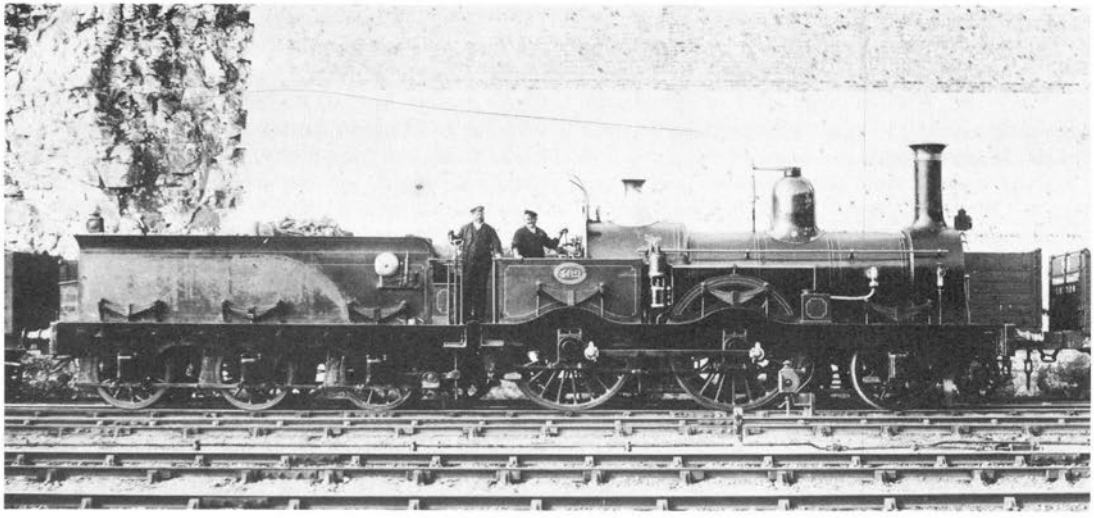
The next seven years saw maintenance of existing services while local population and housing steadily grew. The only changes were minor extensions of the Middle Circle to Aldgate and of the LNWR to Herne Hill (in 1880) along with the resumption of the Brighton summer service in 1882 — this last showing that the growth of population about the line was sufficient to generate its own holiday traffic. Indeed the whole area around Hammersmith was at

Above left:
The Brighton company also used 0-6-0Ts — this is No 46 *Newington* of 1877 in the southeast bay of Kensington station c1880. *Madgwick collection*

Left:
A variety of engines was used on the local parcels traffic, including this GWR 0-6-0T, No 634 of 1871. *Bucknall collection*

Below:
LNWR 0-6-2T No 266 of 1886 seen at Kensington c1890. *Bucknall collection/LGRP*





this time being rapidly built over; just west of Hammersmith came into being London's first planned 'Garden City' — Bedford Park, the creation of the architect R. N. Shaw in 1877-80 — with a station on the Kensington-Richmond line to serve it. To the north a new railway was planned from Latimer Road to Acton but this was not built.[11]

All this new housing demanded new places of recreation, for which halls, athletics grounds and gardens tended to grow up on the fringes of urban development where land was still cheap. The business of bringing people to and from these places was a boon to the West London Railway, for beside it were places of amusement known as (listing them from north to south) the White City, Olympia, Cromwell's Gardens, Earl's Court, Lillie Bridge Athletic Ground, Chelsea Football Stadium and Cremorne Gardens. Cremorne Gardens was the earliest, opened in 1843, and it lasted until 1877.[12] Olympia was built in 1885 by the National Agricultural Hall Co directly adjacent to the unfinished southwest bay of Addison Road station, and opened on Boxing Day, 1886, with the Paris Hippodrome Circus and 'with chariot race and stag hunt'; here also were artificial gardens as well as displays and exhibitions.[13] The railway served Olympia extremely well — it was claimed that 330 trains a day were using the station in 1890 but, surprisingly, no attempt was made to adapt the unfinished bay line that was directly opposite the show place's entrance to serve the crowds. It was to be another 60 years before a platform was put in there. Similarly, Lillie Bridge Athletic Ground was served excellently by West Brompton station for cycle races, university sports and athletic contests.[14]

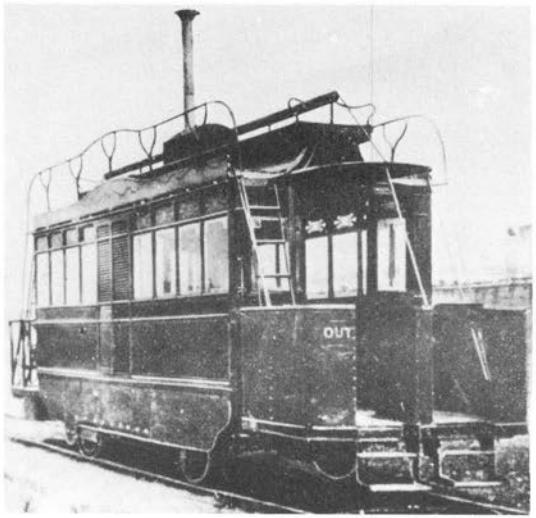
Although the line's main function by now was as a through route, particularly for goods traffic, efforts were continually made to tap what local traffic there was, and the LNWR's 'Tourist Guide' for 1887 drew attention to the availability of private 'omnibuses for family parties' available at Addison Road, where the east side station had a covered forecourt excellent for that facility.[15] The goods and coal yard at Warwick Road did good business; additions were from time to time made to the facilities there. The broad-gauge only tracks in the former canal basin have already been mentioned, and by 1894 the lines had been again rearranged; access from the north was now being cut off and the four lines which formerly entered from that direction were lengthened northwards into bays that could now only be reached from the south. The centre one of the three turntable-access sidings was lengthened almost to Warwick Road. The broad-gauge tracks in the 'basin' were replaced by standard-gauge with a crossover line. A new single siding was added to the west and provided with a travelling crane. Thus the 12 direct-access sidings of 1863 (seven from the north, five from the south only) had 30 years later given place to 10 (mainly longer) terminal lines reached solely from the south.[16]

Returning now to the services on the line, the next 15 years to 1896 saw the continuation of the very full range of trains offered with only very minor alterations,[17] while in the years 1897-9 both northern partners tried out some longer distance services. The GWR added Windsor (1897) and Reading (1898) for certain of its trains to Victoria, and the LNWR ambitiously put on through carriages from Birmingham first to Queenborough and then to Dover to serve the Continent through the London, Chatham and Dover Railway, thus foreshadowing the many experiments with north-south through trains which were to be tried in the new century. There was also of course some additional traffic for Olympia, as for example the North London Railway's half-hourly excursion trains from Broad Street at Easter in 1892 for the 'Venice in London' exhibition. Milk traffic, to

Left:
A dispute over payment meant that this LBSCR 2-4-0, No 247 (later renumbered 462) of 1866, was abandoned for three months in Lillie Bridge sidings.
Bucknall collection

Right:
The Grantham Steam Tram on trials in sidings 1874–75.

Below:
Cremorne Bridge, built in 1863.

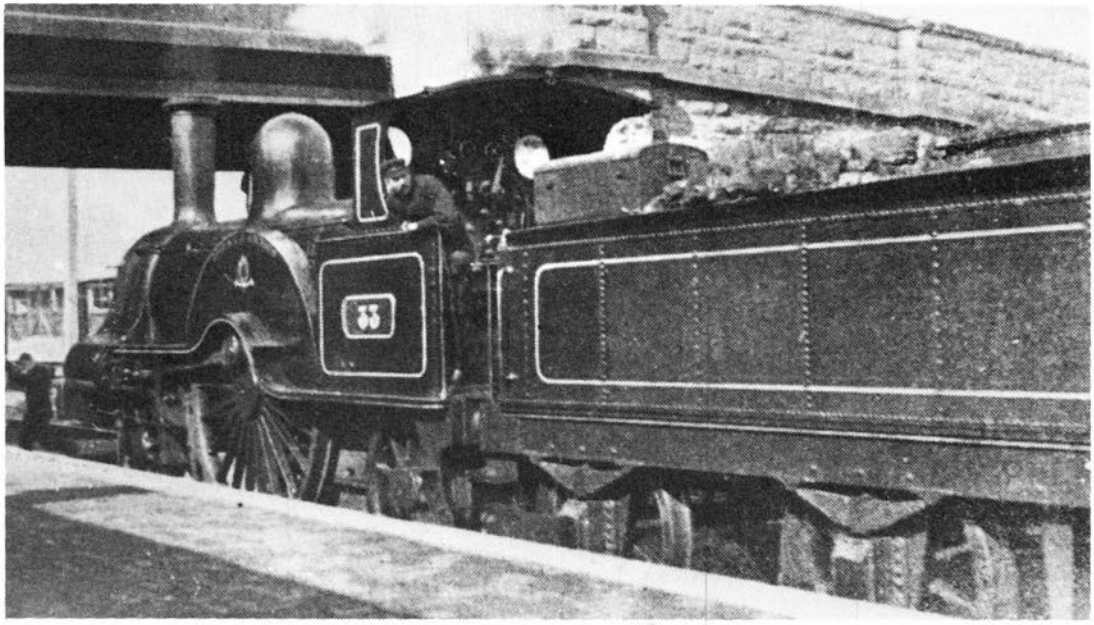


which reference was made earlier, increased vastly in this period, and the whole of the northwest bay in Addison Road was given over to this night and early morning traffic, porters making the night hideous with the din of clanging metal as they loaded empties until 3am; an enormous GWR train of empties was assembled every night with two engines in front and one at the back, all whistling to one another to achieve a simultaneous start to 'rush' the North Pole bank.[18]

All this increased traffic meant some modernisation of the line, particularly in signalling. Semaphore signals with slotted posts and a midway position for 'caution' were in general use in the 1870s, and the final form of the semaphore came into use from about 1887, for which two large signalboxes were built at the two ends of Addison Road station. Interlocking, which had been demonstrated as early as 1859 at Willesden, became general by about 1873, and facing point locks were introduced a few years later. Sidings still had discs on spindles near the ground.

The amount of traffic through Addison Road made it a noisy place in fog — fog which in coal-burning London lay in deep brown clouds of a density unknown to later generations. The two signalboxes had special levers which placed a single fog signal on the through lines, but these could only be used once and then had to be replenished by hand. 'Fogmen' had to stand at the foot of the more important signal posts, and sometimes if lucky had a small hut to retire to where they could light a fire. Refreshments were supposed to be sent to them every three hours but this could not always be done. Some idea of the work involved is given by the figure of 3,572 fogmen attending 2,462 signal posts on the LNWR system in the great five-day fog of January 1888. Block telegraph, which had been in use on the West London line since 1862, was replaced in 1877 by three-wire telegraph, and a few years later by a combined block telegraph and bell developed by the LNWR. As southbound traffic grew, a train describer was installed in Addison Road South Main signalbox to give advance information to Latchmere Junction box so as to enable traffic there for four different directions to be regulated without delay. These large boxes with their basic comforts for signalmen had certainly been overdue.[19]

The levers in Kensington South Main signalbox were of the LNWR pattern with large ring grips, as



used throughout the West London Railway proper; for the Extension line the pattern followed was that of the GWR with hinged handgrips on the levers. Whichever system was used, the rods and cables required considerable strength to move. Point rods could be as much as 220yd long, and distant signal wires up to three quarters of a mile. Many years later, as a boy of 11 allowed by a friendly signalman to set points and signals in the quiet of Sundays, I never could shift the distand signal at Earl's Court Junction, and it is to be feared that some down trains approached more cautiously than they need have done, though there was in any case a tight speed limit through the station.

Above:
The LNWR 2-2-2 No 53, *Erebus*, of 1860. This type of engine worked through services up to the end of the 19th century.

Below:
Battersea station (behind the hoardings on the left) was built in 1863 and destroyed in 1940.

Some minor changes along the line in the latter part of the century should be noted. Willesden High Level station received extra lines and platform, opened on 12 August 1894. At Chelsea the filling in of the canal had resulted in a much reduced flow of water from Bull Creek, with consequent silting up of the dock, and this was corrected by walling up the river front in 1875. The spread of house building in Addison Gardens necessitated a roadbridge, and this was built in 1878 with two steel spans, one for the West London and one for the Richmond line curve. At Latchmere Junction two small signalboxes for the four diverging lines were combined in one larger one. The level crossing at Poupart's Lane was replaced by a footbridge, as earlier noted. A small new goods depot was opened by the LNWR just south of West Brompton station in 1891.

Responsibility for maintenance was divided between the LNWR (Willesden to Earls Court Junction) and the GWR (onward to the south). The general name of West London Joint Railways was adopted for the whole, and a joint committee of the four major partners managed the line's affairs.[20]

There were some occasional notable special trains. Queen Victoria used the line at least twice. The first time was on 10 December 1870 when she travelled from Windsor to Watford, the Royal train reversing

in Kensington station where the LNWR pilot and train engines took it over. The second time was on 23 November 1875 when the Royal train from Ballater to Windsor could not follow its customary route on account of floods, and was diverted to the West London line for reversal, this time at Shepherds Bush where two GWR engines took it over for the climb to North Pole Junction. Another special train of interest ran on 25 May 1898 following the death of W. E. Gladstone. The body of the great statesman was brought from Hawarden to Westminster by way of Earl's Court Junction, and borne from the District Railway platform to Westminster Hall through the private subway built for the Houses of Parliament.

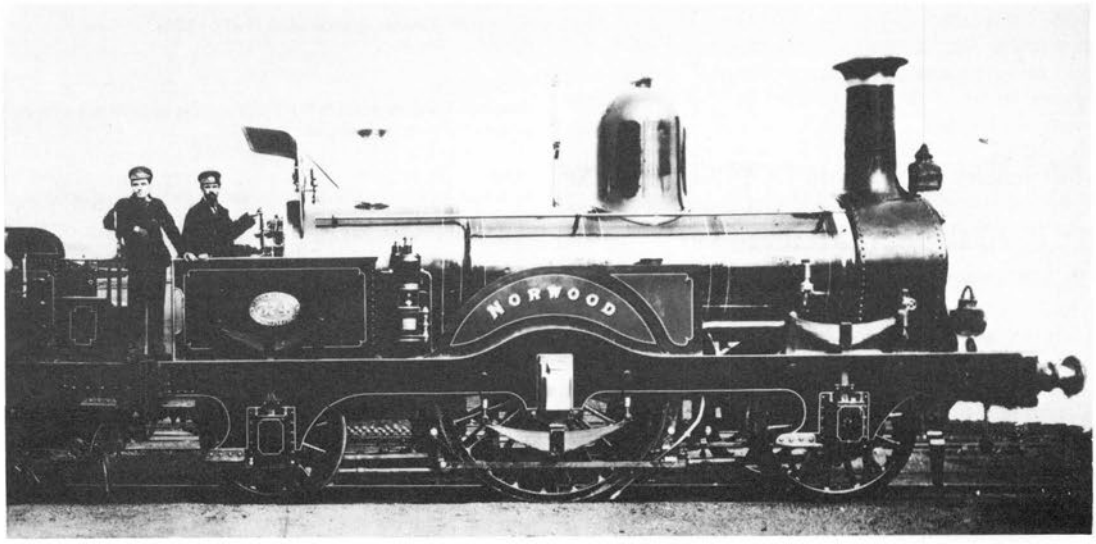
Looking now at the motive power used on the line, the 30 years to the end of the century certainly saw the use of most of the types of the parent companies' engines at one time or another — and in a rich variety of green, yellow, brown, and black liveries and gleaming brasswork — but it is only possible to mention a few.

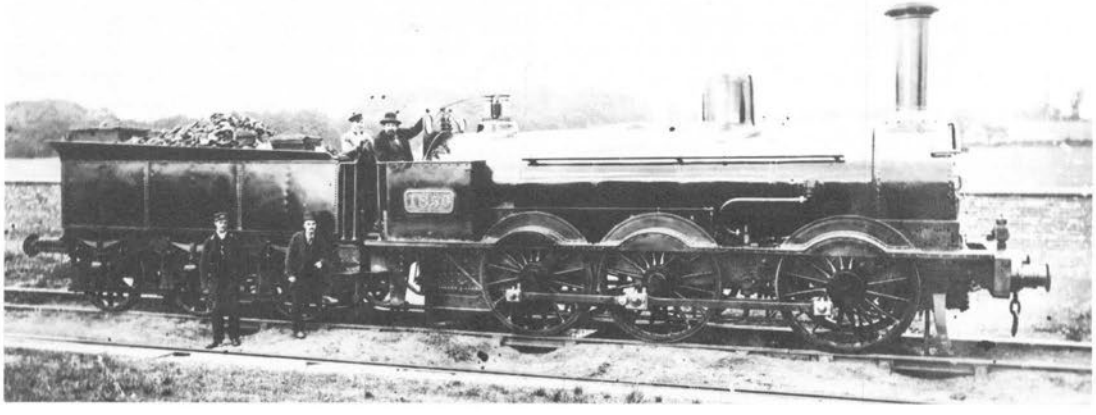
The LNWR's contribution was mostly twofold — goods engines for transfer traffic to Lillie Bridge, and tank engines for the short distance passenger services to the Brighton and District lines. For the first the ubiquitous 0-6-0 type served, from Ramsbottom's long-lived 'DX' class of 1858 to the '17in Coal Engines' of 1873 and the versatile 'Cauliflowers' of 1880. For the passenger service to Victoria 0-6-0 saddletank engines of Ramsbottom or Webb design, dating as a class from 1870, were mostly used.[21] Later these were replaced by 2-4-0 and 0-6-2 tank types, and from 1879 onwards these in turn gave place to the several types of 2-4-2 tank engines that were destined to maintain the services for the next 50 years. For the Outer Circle service (for which close-coupled sets of nine carriages were used) special engines were needed for tunnel work, and these were adapted or developed in the form of 4-4-0, 4-4-2, 2-4-2 Simple, and 2-2-2-2 and 2-2-4-0 Compound tank engines, the fruit of much experimenting by Webb to find the best.[22] Occasional long distance passenger trains using the line brought 2-2-2 express engines of the 'Problem' class of 1859 and 2-4-0 engines of the 'Precedent' class of 1872 — both of which had useful lives extending into the next century.

The locomotive commitments of the GWR were for exchange traffic to Lillie Bridge (especially locomotive coal), a growing milk traffic, local goods traffic to Chelsea Dock, and the two well-established suburban passenger services of Southall-Victoria and the Middle Circle. The first was taken care of by a succession of 0-6-0 types, from the '57' class of 1855 (some of which lasted to 1913), to Dean's Standard goods engines of 1883, many of which lasted for 70 years. Milk and local parcels traffic was handled mainly by 0-6-0 saddle or pannier-tank types which might be of almost any age, the type having been built from 1864 into the 20th century. The Southall-Victoria and Middle Circle services were worked by 2-4-0 or 0-4-2 tank engines — fitted with condensing gear where necessary — of which large numbers were built between 1868 and 1899.[23]

For the Middle Circle service, with so much of its course in tunnel, a batch of 2-4-0 side-tank engines with condensing apparatus was built from 1872 onwards. The engines had entirely open cabs, on the theory that the driver could see better in tunnel that way. For Smithfield meat traffic (also in tunnel) two awkward looking 2-4-0 well-tank engines were built

Below:
One of the trains working the Willesden-Croydon service in 1883 was *Norwood*, a LBSCR 2-2-2, No 374 of 1871. *LGRP (Courtesy David & Charles)*





Top:
LNWR 2-4-0 No 445, *Ixion* of 1873, used on passenger services c1875–1900. *Locomotive Publishing Co*

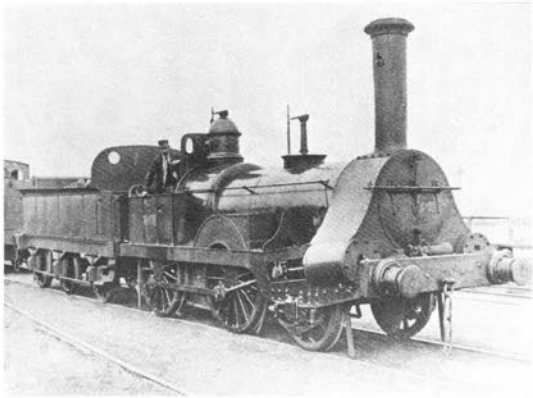
Above:
LNWR 0-6-0 No 1850 of 1866. *Locomotive Publishing Co*

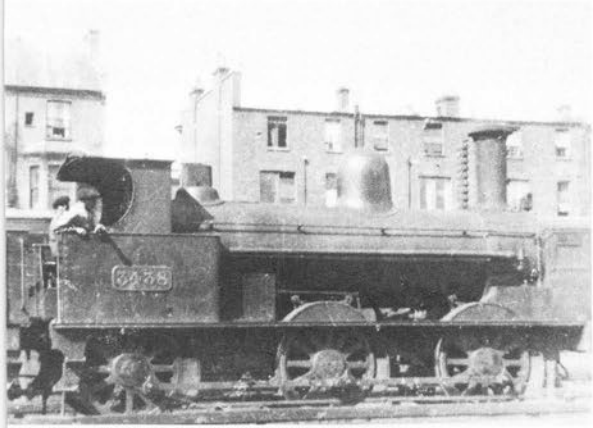
Top right:
A LNWR 'Crewe Goods' 2-4-0 of c1860.
Ian Allan Library

Above right:
The 1879 0-6-0 engine No 3438 of the LNWR on a down goods train at Kensington in 1920.

Right:
Seen as used on Lillie Bridge exchange goods traffic is the LBSCR's 0-6-0 No 468 (ex-249) of 1868.
Locomotive Publishing Co

in 1864 — Nos 320 and 321. They had steeply inclined outside cylinders, and were replaced in due course by 0-6-0 side-tank condensing engines.[24] These last frequently appeared on the West London line on local parcels trains, as did also the 'Metropolitans'. One of the early Wolverhampton-built 2-4-0 tank engines — No 344 of 1865 — also served the line; it was derailed at North Pole Junction in September 1874. Long distance excursion or special trains of this period were worked in the early years by 'Queen' class 2-2-2 engines of 1873, later the 'Stella' 2-4-0 class of 1883, and towards the end of the century the first of the 4-4-0 'Duke' class. The Brighton company's commitment over this period was for a few express trains from Addison Road to Brighton, local trains as far as Croydon, and the 'shuttle' Clapham Junction service, plus a steady goods traffic — much of it locomotive coal — from Lillie Bridge sidings. For the first were used 2-2-2 and 2-4-0 express types (the company even named its 2-2-2 engine No 205 *Kensington* in 1872). For the second and third were used a rich variety of elderly engines. Those used before 1869 have been described in the previous chapter, and they in turn were replaced by two more very early engines numbered 62 and 63,[25] and then by two new engines ordered specially for the service and numbered 96 and 53.[26] At the end of 1873 Stroudley's famous 'Terrier' 0-6-0 tank engines took over the services, No 46 *Newington* and No 61 *Sutton* working there for many years.[27] Other types also appeared — the 2-2-2 engine No 374 *Norwood* on a Croydon-Willesden train collided at Battersea with the LNWR 'Webb Coal' 0-6-0 engine No 2256 on an evening train on 6 November 1883. About the end of

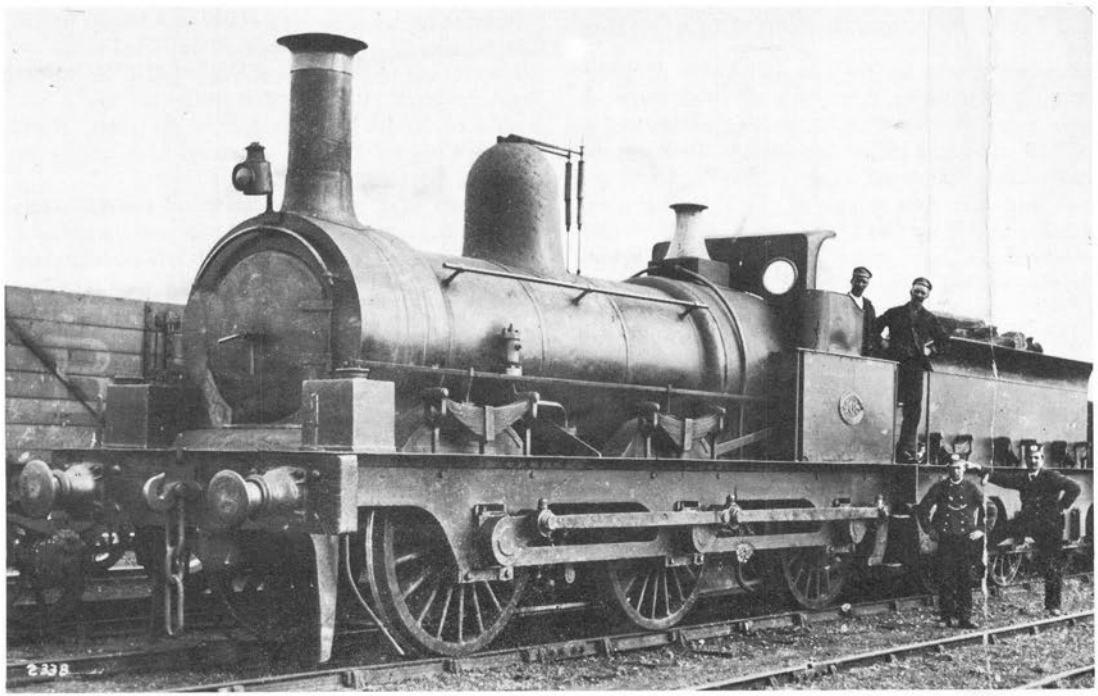


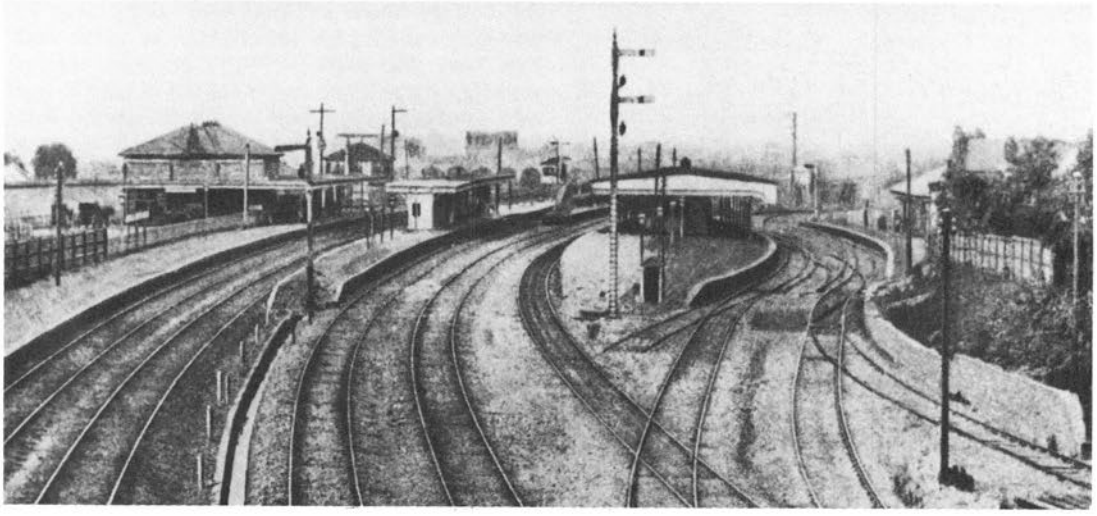


the century these services were taken over by Stroudley's 0-4-2 tank engines, 125 of which were built over the years 1873-87. Brighton engines working the goods and coal trains out of Lillie Bridge were several generations of 0-6-0 type, starting with those of 1866 and going on to usually the latest types available, since the coal trains were some of the heaviest the railway had to handle.[28] Other Brighton engines seen on the line included some sent north by reason of trials, exhibitions, or sale, and certainly added variety to the Addison Road scene.[29]

The LSWR, which used the line almost solely for suburban passenger services, tended to use smart and up-to-date engines for these. By 1869 the services were being maintained by 2-4-0 well-tank engines built from 1866 to 1871, which were highly successful in their day and in 1873 by some 0-6-0 goods engines.[30] As trains became heavier, their place was taken by 4-4-0 engines of the 'Metropolitan' class as used by so many London railways, six of these being bought for the purpose in 1874, and five years later by Adam's own version of the 4-4-0 suburban tank engine, known as 'Ironclads'.[31] These too gave excellent service on the West London lines and were in turn replaced by the new 0-4-4 tank engines from c1890 onwards.[32] The occasional long distance special trains were worked either by 0-4-2 'Jubilee' class engines or by the outside-cylinder 4-4-0 'X6' class from c1896.

Although without running powers over the line, the London, Chatham & Dover Railway had joint services with the GWR, and its engines were





Above:
The WLER station at Clapham Junction (on right) with broad-gauge lines c1865.

Left:
Cremorne Bridge. The alignment of the broad-gauge track is still visible in this 1966 photograph.

Above right:
An Outer Circle train approaching Willesden c1900, hauled by LNWR 2-4-2T No 781 of 1889.
Bucknall collection

occasionally seen on the line on parcels or goods trains. The working timetables of 1893 show six trains a day through Longhedge Junction (as well as a GWR train with cattle) and though GWR engines were usually employed, engines from the south had to be sent from time to time to pick up goods trains at Lillie Bridge or Old Oak Common. They would usually have been 0-4-4 or (earlier) 0-4-2 tank engines, and 0-6-0 tender types. The South Eastern Railway also had no running powers, but its 0-6-0 engines appeared occasionally on goods trains, and 0-4-4 tank types on parcels traffic.

The foregoing can only hope to give a partial idea of the enormous variety of engines to be seen on the West London line between 1869 and 1899. It must have made fascinating watching for the casual observer, the more so because of the colourful range of the six companies' train liveries that company pride kept clean and shining. Headboards and head codes sometimes adorned the engines too.[33] Added to the scene would be the quite frequent passing of new engines on their way from builders in the north to the southern lines, literally hundreds of which passed through Addison Road on delivery.[34]

Some miscellaneous events on the line are worth recording. In 1880 there was an attempt to rob a passenger as his train was entering Addison Road. The robber, after a ferocious attack, tried to throw his victim out of the carriage window but was apprehended when the train stopped and in due course was sentenced to be flogged and to 20 years' penal servitude — a kind of deterrent that might be welcome a century later.

In April 1891 a Sunday service of LNWR trains from Willesden to Addison Road was introduced which (in the words of the LNWR's Superintendent of the Line) 'had long been pressed for by residents and which the strong Sabbatarianism of the late Chairman had refused' though only a single engine and train were used.

In November 1896 a man tried to jump from a train crossing Cremorne Bridge for a bet and a large crowd had gathered by the river below to watch him. The Chelsea Stationmaster had become suspicious and accompanied the train, and stopped it on the bridge when a man was seen climbing out of a carriage window by means of a rope thrown over the roof. He was restrained from jumping, but turned up again with less publicity a few days later and made his dive into the river.

As a footnote to the end of the century and a sign of changes to come, it should be recorded that in

1899 the very first electric train to be seen on the line passed through Addison Road station. This was an experimental six-car electric train of compartment stock delivered by the makers to the District Railway at Lillie Bridge for trials between High Street Kensington and Earl's Court. With the new century a new element was to be added to the variety of pasenger traffic over the line, namely the introduction of long distance through trains. There had been through excursion runs in the past (for example one from Leighton to Crystal Palace on 27 July 1876) and in 1897 an experimental public through service was put on by the LNWR and the London, Chatham & Dover lines from Birmingham to Queenborough and Dover. Whether such workings would appeal to the public the next few years were to show.

Finally mention should be made of the very first use of the line's unique through running function for the purposes of war; 37 years old but still beautiful in every line, the LNWR's 'Problem' class Single No 291 *Prince of Wales* drew into Addison Road station on 16 October 1899, carrying the men of the 2nd Cheshire Regiment from Crewe to Chatham. Their destination, the Transvaal.

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1 Coal dues, a tax that had existed for at least six centuries, were still levied for London, and the railways bringing in the coal were responsible for this. Stone obelisks stood as reminders on every road, railway and canal at 15 miles radius from the City and many examples survive, that for the London & Birmingham Railway being between Bushey and Watford. The tax was not abolished till 1890; one of the last uses made of the considerable money it brought in was to build Holborn viaduct.

2 A map of 1868 shows a connecting line from the District Railway, but only as a spur, alongside a terminal station (to have been named Hammersmith Road) occupying most of the space on the south side of the turnpike road westwards as far as North End Road. Perhaps this was to avoid contributing to the cost of Addison Road station. At any rate the project was abandoned and a simple connection to the West London line made.

3 The directors showed more interest in improving facilities when threatened with a new railway that would take away traffic. This was the Metropolitan & South Western Junction Railway, whose Bill was before Parliament in 1870 for a line from near Warwick Road to Barnes. The West London directors gave evidence 'that the preamble to the said Bill is untrue and incapable of proof', evidently to such effect that the Bill was thrown out.

4 The Superintendent of the line pointed out in March 1874 that 'while the Metropolitan and Broad Street trains used to terminate in the North Bay and passengers used the Refreshment Rooms, they now ran through, moreover on the West side, and I doubt whether they are really worth now more than £300 a year'.

5 The immediate area of Addison Road station was reported as being 'so moist as to be very suitable for growth of vegetables but not so suitable for human beings' adding that moss grew up to the second floor of houses adjoining the station.

6 The official abandonment of the broad-gauge throughout the line was from the end of November 1875.

7 The Act for the Extension line envisaged the absorption of the older one, which by an Act of 28 July 1863 was to 'dissolve as soon as an agreement with the West London Extension Railway is finally resolved upon', but oddly nothing seems to have been done to implement this, though the terms of compensation were agreed and paid. Later, in 1875 the debenture debt of the Extension Railway was assumed pro rata by the four partner companies.

8 These trains were on Sundays held for two hours from 11am at Addison Road (and presumably all round their

routes), a hint to the ungodly that was continued until July 1903.

9 A potential competitor for Southall traffic appeared in June 1874 when the Southall, Ealing & Shepherds Bush Tram Railway opened, its horse-drawn tramcars starting from outside Uxbridge Road station. This only ran as yet over the first 1½ miles of its intended route, but Shepherds Bush was at this period growing very rapidly, which made even this short tramway worthwhile. The LSWR built a Shepherds Bush station on its Addison Road-Hammersmith line in the same period.

10 Joseph Grantham's steam tramcar was built by the Oldbury Carriage & Wagon Works and fitted with machinery by Merryweather's of London in 1872. Two small upright boilers stood in the middle of the tram, working an engine under the floor which had two small 4in × 10in cylinders. It was tried first in the street between Victoria and Vauxhall, moved to West Brompton in 1873, and stored in the District Railway's Lillie Bridge depot in 1874. Demonstration runs were made on 6 May 1874 on temporary track in a field, and on 14 April 1875 on the West London Railway's Lillie Bridge sidings. It worked at Wantage from 1876 to 1890, and was sold in 1891 to the Portsdown & Horndean Light Railway (for the incredible sum of £3 10s) where it ran for some 20 years more. I saw it in the Cowplain depot of that line in 1931 in store. It was the world's first successful self-propelled tramcar, and won the Howard Award of the Society of Arts.

11 The Hammersmith & City Railway had built a station (Latimer Road) at the junction of the West London spur with its own line in 1868. Work was started there on the proposed new line in 1882, but was abandoned. The abutments of the bridge by which it was to have crossed the North & South Western Junction Railway in a cutting are still to be seen.

12 Cremorne Gardens covered 12 acres just east of the railway bridge, with a gate on to the river for 'penny steamers'. It had a bandstand, dancing floor, pagoda, circus, Swiss châlet, Indian temple and banqueting hall. It was an age when few parks were open, and perhaps Battersea Park is a modern equivalent, for one could walk round and look at the gardens and side-shows. Such 'gardens' faded out only when the Commons Act of 1876 saved the big commons from being built over and so gave London its major parks. At Cremorne Gardens one Selina Young crossed the River on a tightrope, and one Mme Poitevin made a balloon ascent seated on a cow.

13 Some of Olympia's early events were Barnum & Bailey's 'Greatest Show on Earth' in 1889 and 1890, 'Venice in London' in 1892 (that cost £50,000 to build and lasted 13 weeks) and in 1893 an exhibition of 'Rontgen x-rays, the Electrophone, Theatregraphe Animated Pictures, and magnificent display of Rhododendrons in the Crystal Gardens', followed (1894) by 'The Orient', described as 'a Terpsichorean and Lyric Spectacle'.

14 It came violently to an end when two professional sprinters failed to turn up, and 'a wrathful mob wrecked the stands and pavilions of the grounds' — a reaction that has all too familiar a sound at the present day.

15 The charge was three shillings for three miles, or double if two horses were needed, 'driver and a reasonable quantity of luggage included'.

16 Surviving relics of the lines of the 1840s were (until the whole yard was swept away in 1975) the tops of the canal basin walls and a length of curved brickwork just south of Addison Bridge marking the path of the sharply curved entry of that time.

17 The LNWR increased its Willesden-Addison Road service in 1892, and withdrew its Waterloo service at the end of 1893.

18 Mid-century London was still being served by cows kept in city cowhouses, but following an outbreak of rinderpest in 1865-7 the keeping of cattle in London had been totally prohibited, and very large quantities of milk had to be brought in daily by rail. The GWR brought in the largest amount, from its many stations in Wiltshire, and by the end of the century this traffic amounted to about 25million gal/year. Special slat-sided vans were built, the milk being carried in large pewter churns and the gaps between the slats helping to keep them cool. Also some older third-class carriages were adapted for this purpose — it was unkindly said that not much adaptation was required.

19 Switchmen had to stand by the track the whole day and were even more exposed to the elements than were drivers and firemen of cabless locomotives. They had a very small stove to keep their hands warm, but anything more comfortable was discouraged. Many had responsibility for signals as well, and over the years they developed a very odd piece of furniture called the signalman's chair, with high sides and back and small glass windows in the sides. A good specimen of this object is to be seen in York Museum. Needless to say, its use was strongly discouraged, and a Board of Trade inspector stated that 'the signalmen are on duty for 12 hours, but I submit it is not desirable that such comfortable means should be provided for them to go to sleep on duty'.

20 Many years later the railway historian LeVien, to whose researches so much historical information on the West London Railway is due, was Secretary to this joint committee in the interwar years.

21 Also believed to have been used on this service was a small 0-4-2 saddletank engine No 1168. This had been built in 1859 for the Vale of Clwyd Railway and was named *Galtfeinan*, the line having been taken over by the LNWR.

22 When Webb took office in 1871 he sensibly accepted the experience of the Metropolitan Railway with a special type of 4-4-0 outside-cylinder condensing tank engine. Sixteen of these were ordered from Messrs Beyer & Peacock, and were finished in LNWR colours but kept the makers' polished brass dome. Later Webb experimented with compounding for the tunnel work, rebuilding one of the 'Metropolitan' engines (No 2063) to 4-4-2 type with compound working. In 1885 he rebuilt one of his 2-4-2 side-tank engines (No 687) as a 2-2-2-2 Compound, and in 1887 did the same to a similar engine (No 600) but with

smaller wheels. The fourth and last of these experimental engines was the 2-2-4-0 tank engine No 777. All the Compound engines were unpopular with the passengers because of their violent 'hunting' movement that affected the whole train, and it was often noted that the high pressure wheels would on starting revolve twice at least before the other pair started to move at all. Webb later rebuilt more of the 4-4-0 tank engines to 4-4-2 type, with larger coal bunkers and double weatherboards, and these worked the services around London till nearly the end of the century, being then gradually replaced by Webb's highly successful 2-4-2 and 0-6-2 tank types.

23 Most of the 0-4-2 tank class, built between 1868 and 1897, was sent when new to the provinces and seldom appeared in London, but in 1887-9 some of the '3521' class worked London local services, including the Southall-Victoria one, before being withdrawn for rebuilding to cure bad riding — first to 0-4-4 tank type and then to 4-4-0 tender engines.

24 As this traffic grew, a dozen 0-6-0 side-tank engines (Nos 633-44) built in 1871-2 were fitted with condensers for the Metropolitan tunnel run, on which some of them remained employed for over 60 years, often also appearing on milk and parcels trains on the West London line. One (No 634) worked regularly on the line as pilot for the very long trains of milk empties daily sent 'up the bank' to the West London carriage sidings.

25 These were former 2-2-2 tank engines from Fenton & Co in 1847-8, rebuilt to 0-4-2 arrangement in 1865 and put to work on the Clapham Junction service in 1870.

26 The first (No 96) ran the shuttle service from 1869 to 1872, after which it was sent to Brighton, renumbered several times, and named successively *Kemp Town*, *Hayling Island* and *Inspector*. The second (No 55) had been built by Sharp & Stewarts in 1872 for a railway in Tunis, but for some reason or other that railway took from the builders a different engine, that had been intended for the Jersey Railway. That line then refused the 2-4-0 tank engine they were offered in lieu and Craven (who was connected with all three railways) took it into the Brighton stock and used it on a three-coach train between Addison Road and Clapham Junction until 1875. Even with its small (4ft) wheels it could not manage more than three coaches and so was relegated to Newhaven Harbour for building work. It is interesting to note that for one month (January 1869) prior to the delivery of No 96, a similar but privately owned engine of the same type was employed on the Addison Road 'shuttle'. It was painted dark green with red lining, and with its builders' name and number. After trials it was returned to the makers in Manchester.

27 They were tough and durable small engines, and both lasted nearly 90 years and passed into state ownership. *Sutton* remained on London duties up to October 1920, and was withdrawn in 1963. *Newington*, after passing first to the LSWR and then to the Freshwater, Yarmouth & Newport Railway, was withdrawn in 1964 and has since been preserved.

28 Known to have been used on the line were Nos 193, 209 and 211 in 1873, Nos 224 and 225 from c1874 to 1895 and after 1882 the new engines Nos 427-30.

29 In 1875 the 2-2-2 express engine No 191 *Grosvenor* passed through in June with a train on its way to the Newark Brake Trials. It is recorded that it was 'beautifully turned out for the occasion, prepared under Mr Stroudley's vigilant eye by no less a person than the celebrated Michael Reynolds, who was then Running Shed Superintendent'. Then in 1881 another Brighton 'single' — No 329 *Stephenson* — was sent through on its way to Wylam for the George Stephenson centenary celebrations. Also northbound through Addison Road station passed three Brighton 2-4-0 engines — Nos 151, 363 and 455 — sold to the West Lancashire Railway in 1883, and in 1885 the 0-6-0 goods engine No 219 sold to the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway. To these as a matter of interest should be added four diminutive contractors' tank engines sold to Boulton's famous siding c1870; two were 0-4-2 tank engines named *Brighton* and *Portsmouth* and two of 0-4-0 type, *Bristol* and *Isaac Dixon*.

30 LSWR 2-4-0 well-tank engines on the Addison Road services included Nos 190 (until rebuilt in 1883 as a tender engine), 250, 253, 258-60, 265-7, 269 and 270. In addition, new 0-6-0 engines Nos 282-4 were used in 1873 for a few months before being allotted their intended goods train work. Of these No 282 was still in use (by then No 7 *Rother* of the Kent & East Sussex Railway) some 60 years later, resplendent still with the polished brass steamdome of an earlier age of elegance.

31 These were gradually rebuilt from 4-4-0 to 4-4-2 tank type over the years 1883-6, mainly to be able to carry more coal, and were used for many years on the Addison Road-Hammersmith-Richmond services.

32 The first 0-4-4 tank engines were the larger ones of the 'T1' class, built 1888-9 and numbered 61-70. These were followed by the smaller '02' class of 1889-95 of which 10 were stationed when new in London (Nos 227-36) and for many years worked the 'shuttle' and the Hammersmith line trains.

33 LNWR engines on the Outer Circle route carried not only a headcode (of a white diamond one side of the funnel and a white 'O' on the other) but a destination board with the names of the main stations served, probably much needed when trains of such varied routes used the same platform at Addison Road station.

34 Very many engines passed through from makers in the North of England to three lines of the south. In the period covered by this chapter at least 107 engines were delivered to the LBSCR, 77 to the London, Chatham & Dover, and 155 to the South Eastern lines. The very last (to the newly formed South Eastern & Chatham company) were five rather unusual looking 4-4-0 express engines, Nos 676-680; originally intended for the Great North of Scotland Railway, they were furnished with large roomy double-windowed cabs. Necessary in their home climate, such comfort for the engine driver was unheard of in the South. It is also of interest that the handsome broad-gauge express engine *Lord of the Isles* was exhibited at Earl's Court in 1893, although by then no broad-gauge track existed any more. It is therefore probable that it was brought on trucks by the West London line, which had the nearest siding to the exhibition ground.

4
Local Competition and Long Distance Enterprise: 1900-14

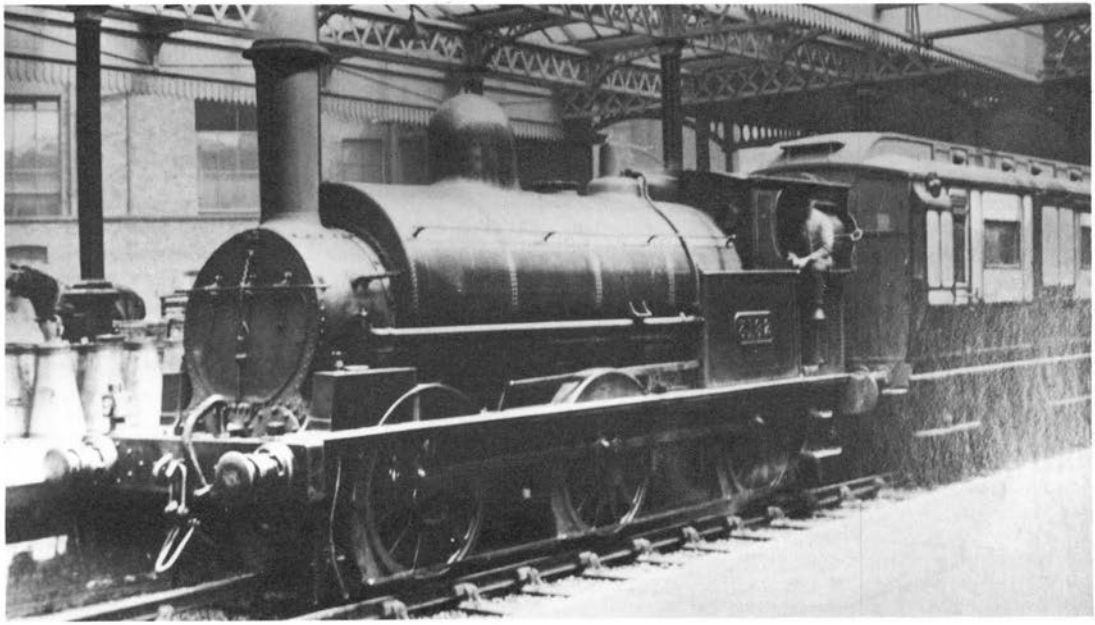
The year 1900 saw the West London Railway and its Extension line at the peak of utilisation for passenger traffic, but at the same time facing the first serious competition of their existence. This, centred on Uxbridge Road, took the form of tube train to the east and electric tramway to the west. The Central London Railways line to the Bank was opened on 27 June 1900 (its station adjacent to that at Uxbridge Road), thus wiping out at one blow the appeal of both Outer and Middle Circle routes to the City. This was so evident that the Middle Circle service was discontinued only three days later, being replaced from 1 July by an Aldgate-Earl's Court service. All this however gave at least some respite to the District Railway, part of whose line had long been crowded to saturation point with 19 trains an hour.[1] Meanwhile the short horsed-tram service which had started from the hump of the Uxbridge Road Bridge in 1874 had developed into a modern electric tramway which by 1901 had reached

Below:
LNWR 0-6-0ST No 3192 of 1876, on the Willesden-Victoria service. *Bucknall collection*

Above right:
Two MDR electric locomotives on an Outer Circle train in 1905. *C. Clapper*

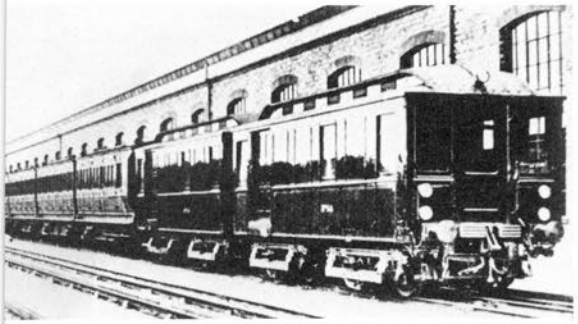
Right:
Another Outer Circle engine was this LNWR 4-2-2-0T of 1884, No 3026 (ex-2063).

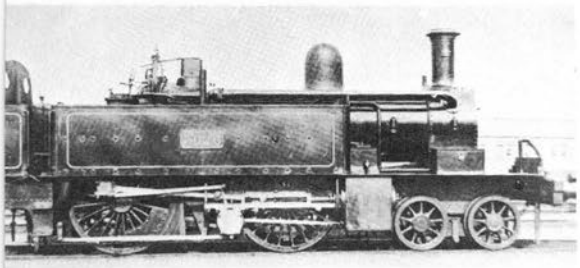
Below right:
2-2-2-2T No 687 of the LNWR, here on the Outer Circle service. *Bucknall collection*



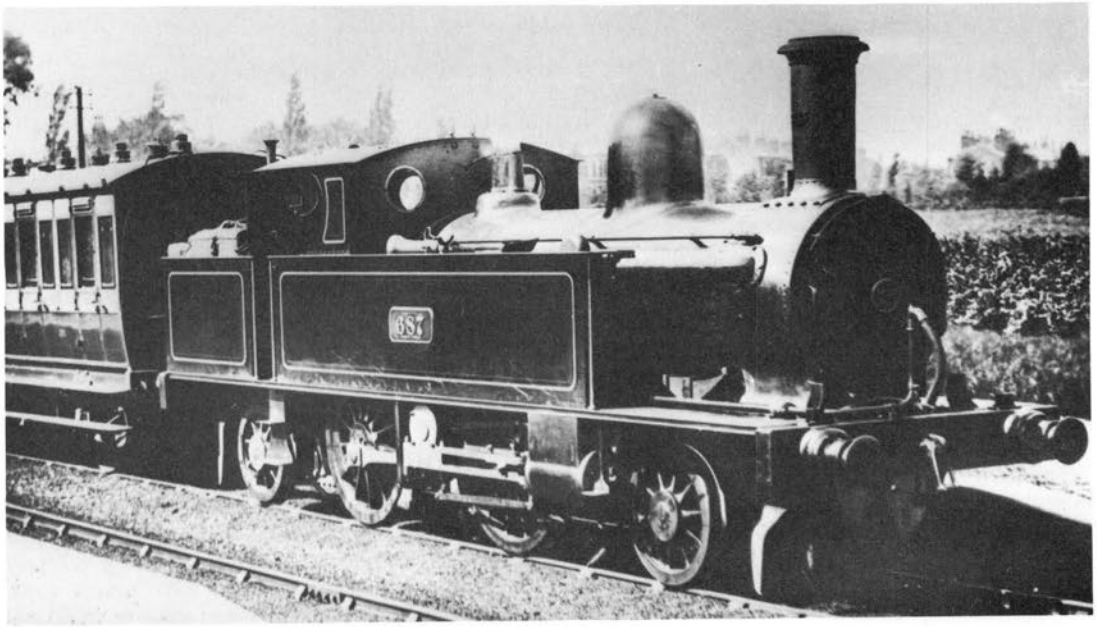
Southall, thus cutting into the traffic of another West London service, that of the GWR from Southall to Victoria.

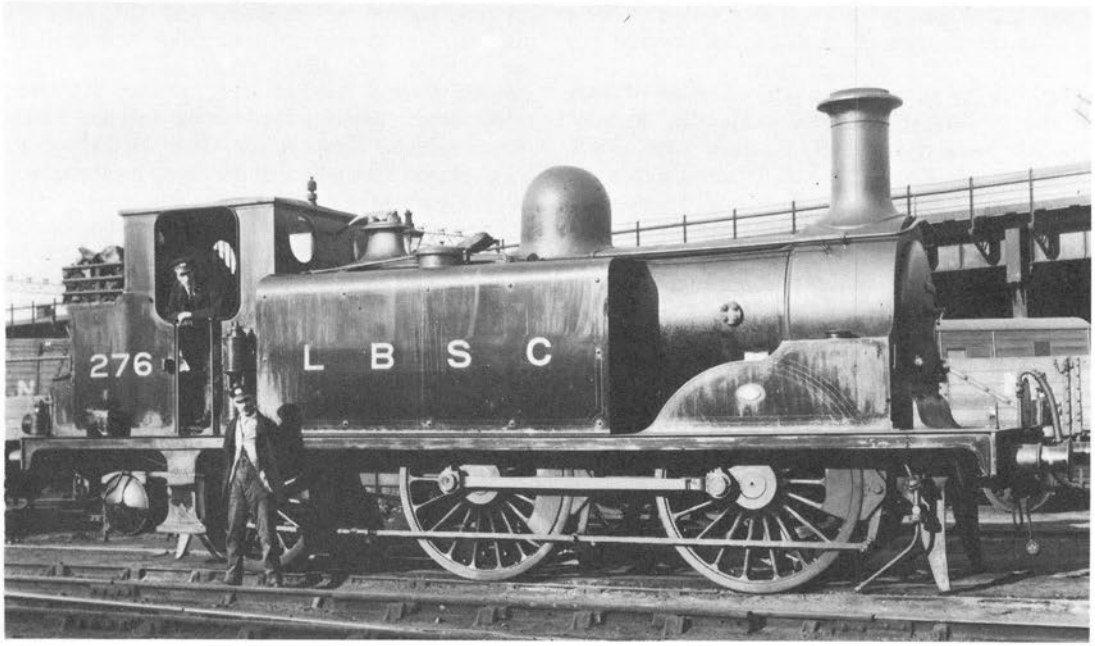
In 1901 the passenger services consisted of three of the LNWR (Broad Street-Victoria, Euston-Croydon and the Outer Circle)[2], two GWR (Aldgate-Earl's Court, Southall-Victoria, with some trains serving Reading, Windsor and Uxbridge as well) and — unchanged — the services of the southern partners, These were the Addison Road-Clapham Junction service of both railways, the summer service to Brighton and the LSWR's meandering route from Ludgate Hill to Richmond. A new service was added from 1 October which scarcely entered London at all, namely a LSWR service from Clapham Junction by Addison Road, Hammersmith, Kew Bridge and Hounslow to Twickenham, thus reflecting the purely local needs of this newly dense western suburban area.

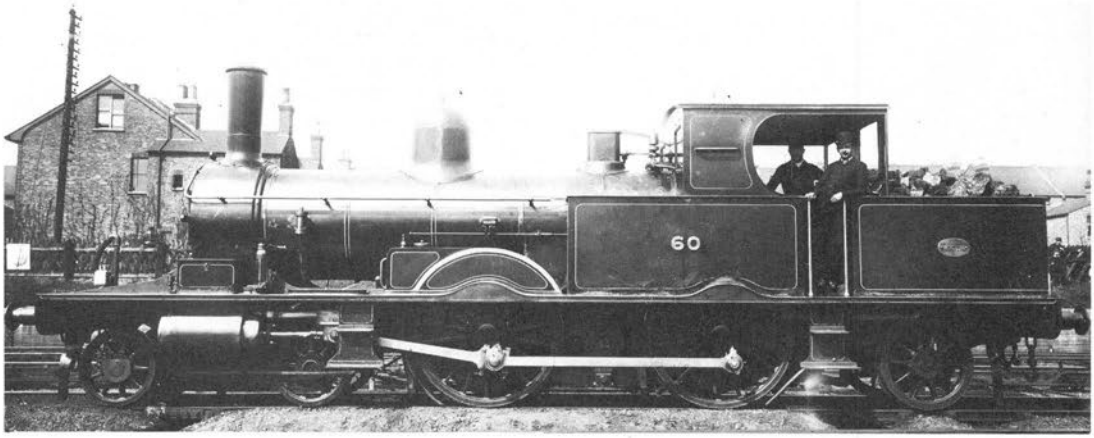




The next two years saw no changes save for the addition of a LBSCR service from Addison Road to Hastings in the summer of 1902, but 1904 saw several developments. The GWR added to its Victoria services one from Staines and one (summer only) from Henley. It also introduced a Sunday service from Addison Road to Acton using for the first time steam rail-motors. The Brighton line discontinued its summer service from Addison Road to Brighton, but in 1905 replaced it with one from Willesden. Most significant of all was the first serious effort to use the line for long distance passenger trains from the north to the south coast seaside towns. This reflected some changes in social conditions of the time. Greater prosperity brought holidays by the sea into fashion, but at the same time greater street congestion in London made getting, say, from Euston to Victoria something to be dreaded. The large piles of luggage people took with them on holidays were, even with a maid, too much to be carried across London other than by cab, so the prospect of through carriage from home town to the sea was highly attractive. First to cater for this were the LNWR and Brighton companies which in 1904 worked through coaches, detached at Willesden, on to Brighton and Eastbourne, and by the following year a complete through train was



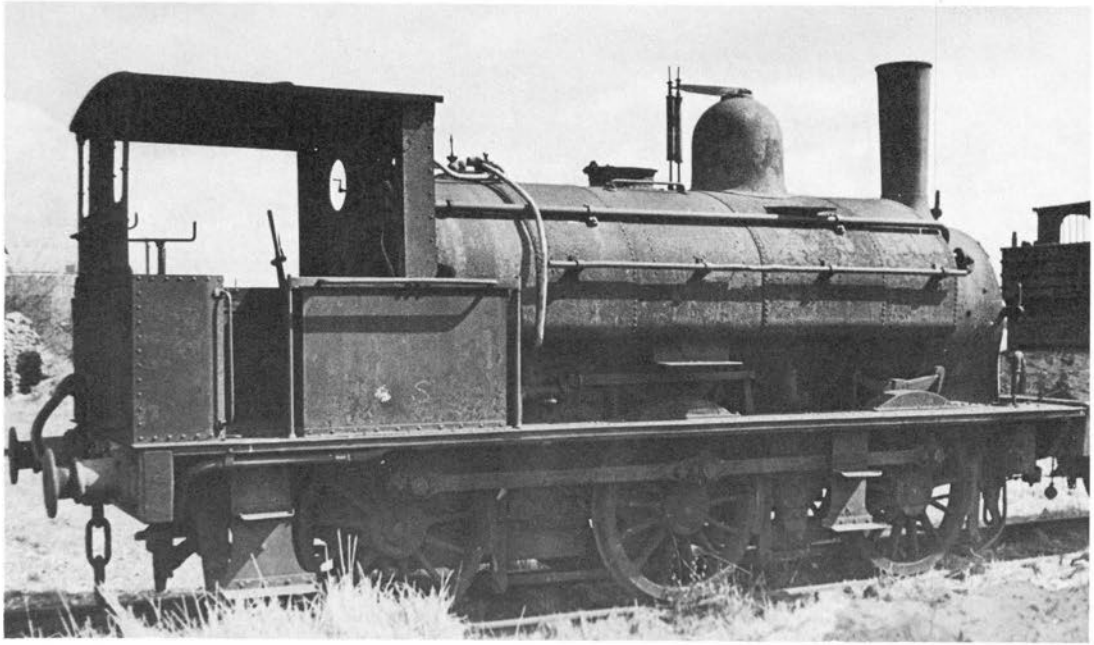




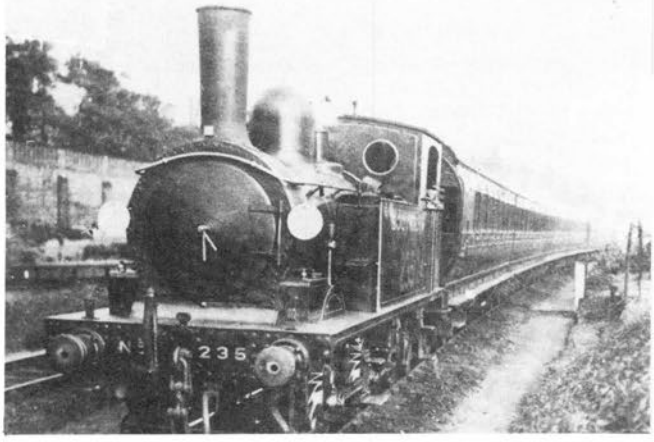
Top:
The LBSCR 0-4-2T No 276 of 1879 was used on the Clapham Junction service from c1890.
Madgwick collection

Above:
No 60 — the LSWR 4-4-2WT of 1883.
Locomotive Publishing Co

running, taken over at Willesden by the Brighton engine and calling at Addison Road and Clapham Junction on the way. 1905 also saw other trial services of the same kind. One was a complicated joint effort of LNWR, LSWR and South Eastern companies to provide through carriages from the North to Folkestone and Dover by one line and to Bournemouth and Weymouth by the other. Yet another through service was started by the GWR in July 1906 with a Birkenhead-Dover slip coach.[3] In 1905 also the Aldgate-Earl's Court relic of the Middle Circle was cut back to Addison Road (where it thus re-entered the large bay built for it 40 years earlier) and the Outer Circle trains were taken over at Earl's Court by District Railway electric locomotives (of which 10 had been built for the purpose) working in pairs. The Brighton line not only resumed its Willesden-Brighton service in the summer of 1906 but put on one from Paddington to Brighton, for no very clear reason but at considerable extra cost.[4] The service started in 2 July 1906 but only ran for one year, ending on 29 July 1907. Meanwhile the Metropolitan Railway had been electrifying its tracks (it had played with the idea, with battery locomotives, as far back as 1866 and again in 1888) and



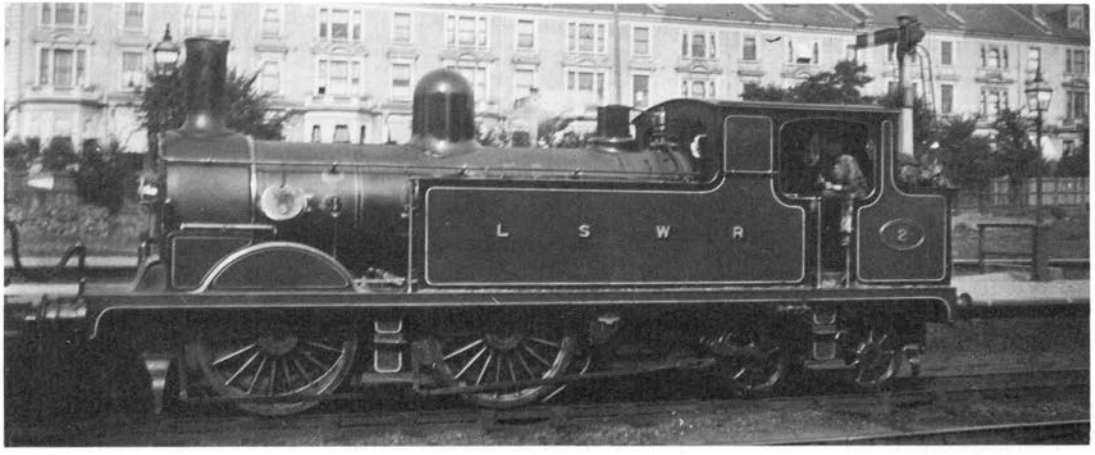
by 1906 the Hammersmith & City Railway was electrified; the spur from Latimer Road and the line through Uxbridge Road and into the northeast bay of Addison Road was equipped and from 5 November 1906 onwards three-car multiple-unit electric trains of the Hammersmith & City Railway went



Above:
One of the 1903 Clapham Junction service engines was LSWR 0-6-0ST No 334 of 1876. *S. C. Townroe*

Right:
On train near Brompton in 1933 was the LSWR's 0-4-4T No 235 of 1895.

Below:
LSWR 0-4-4T No 2 at Addison Road c1903.



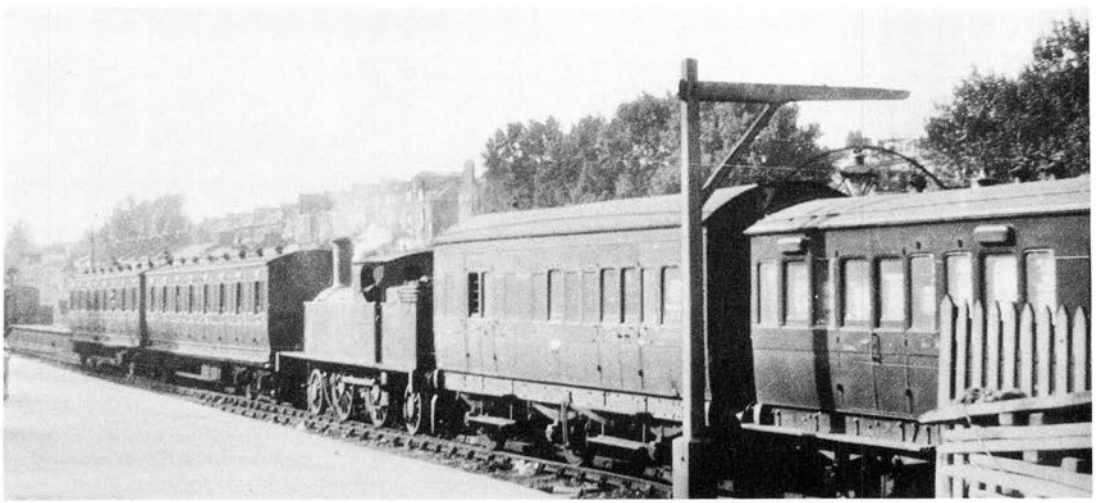
into service. For the first year or so steam trains shared the service, but from 1907 it was wholly electrically operated.[5]

Above:
The Willesden-Victoria service in 1889 — probably LNWR 0-4-2ST No 1168 of 1859. *Bucknall collection*

Below:
A LNWR 2-4-2T on the Victoria-Willesden (parcels) service at Kensington in 1930.

The year 1907 saw one new service added — a summer service of the LSWR from Richmond to Salisbury, going by the odd route of Gunnersbury, Hammersmith, Addison Road and Chelsea to Clapham Junction and express thereafter. Intended to take holidaymakers from the prosperous outer suburbs, it only ran for a short time, being discontinued after the summer of 1909.

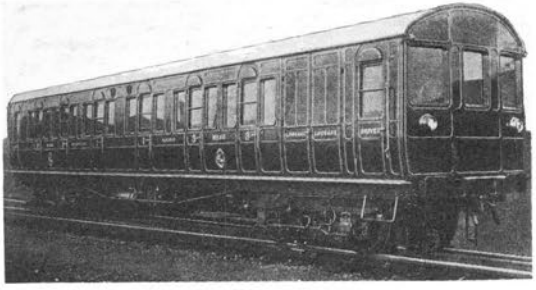
1908 saw five services closed — the GWR slip coach to Deal, the three-company joint service from the north to Bournemouth and Dover, the LSWR's



Richmond-Salisbury experiment, the Brighton's summer service from Addison Road to Hastings and the Outer Circle. This last had 37 years of service behind it but had latterly, like the Middle Circle, been affected by the tube railways. It was replaced, from 1 January 1909, by a service from Willesden to Earl's Court. The only other change in 1909 was the withdrawal of the LSWR service to Twickenham by way of Shepherds Bush.[6]

At this time there were several engineering works on the line. At Mitre Bridge the four-arched brick bridge built in 1860 to replace the level crossing was hindering widening of the GWR main line and was replaced by a single-span steel girder bridge.[7] In 1908 a new branch was built westwards to the Ealing & Shepherds Bush Railway then under construction. It joined the West London line just north of the Hammersmith & City viaduct over the line, at a point named Viaduct Junction. Only a single line was at first built, for contractors' trains, but it was destined later to become a useful route to the GWR's Birmingham line. Other engineering work around this time was the removal of the locomotive turntable at the north end of the northwest bay at Addison Road. The pit was filled in and the two approach lines joined to form a loop line from the northwest bay to the down main line just short of Richmond Junction. Also at Addison Road was built a new signalbox, taking over control of the crossovers both ways and dividing the long station into two convenient block sections.[8] Following current LNWR practice, rings were added to all signal arms referring to 'slow' or platform lines, a feature that lasted until 1926. Further south there was engineering work at Clapham Junction where the old station was being rebuilt, the West London Extension Railway's own station being integrated in the new one for the Brighton line in 1911.

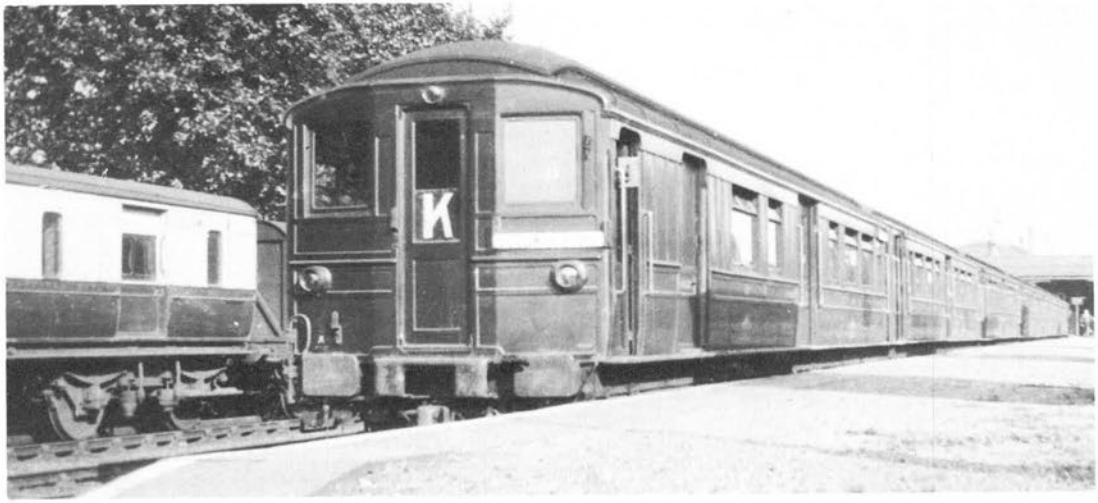
Mention was made in the previous chapter of places of amusement along the line and the facilities that the railway offered them. To Olympia and Earl's Court was now added in 1908 the White City, which

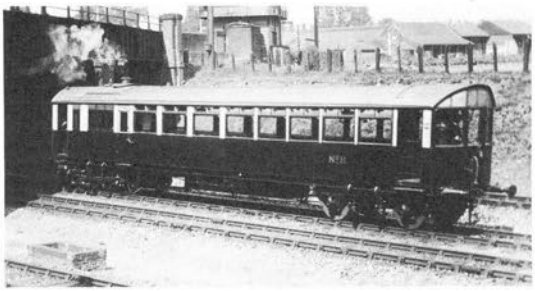


Above left:
The SECR 4-4-0 No 502 of 1903 on the first Kent Coast Express, at Kensington in 1922. *H. R. H. Ward*

Left:
A single-car Metropolitan electric train on the Kensington service in 1918. *London Transport Executive*

Below:
This Hammersmith & City train was at Kensington in 1930.





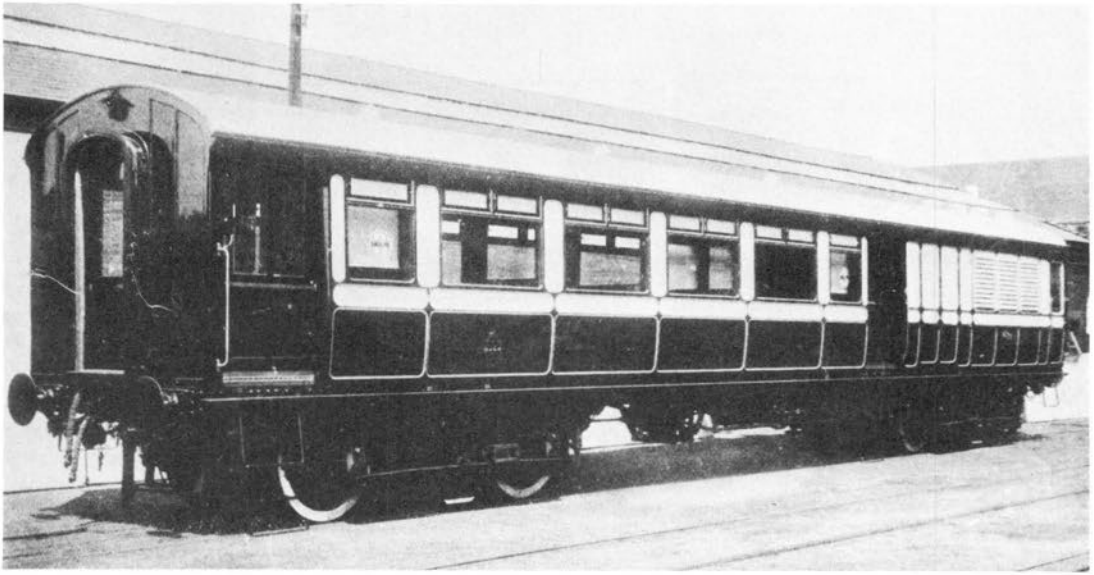
Top:
Former District Railway trains replaced Hammersmith & City stock in 1938.

Above:
GWR Railmotor No 11 of 1904 on the Uxbridge–Clapham Junction service in 1914. *Bucknall collection*

Below:
The 1895 0-4-4T No 235 of the LSWR at Kensington in 1928.

was built just west of Shepherds Bush goods yard with a pretentious stucco entrance building almost beside the station. Some of the halls were built on piles, some at ground level; there were elaborate walks and fountains and gardens and — built in 1909 for the Olympic Games — a stadium. This was a time when much was being spoken of 'L'entente cordiale' and the opening show of the White City was a Franco-British Exhibition in 1908, repeated in 1912. One of the displays in the 1908 exhibition was of locomotives, and the South Eastern & Chatham Railway (SECR) sent its 'royal engine', the new 4-4-0 express engine No 516, beautifully prepared, and for contrast the ancient 0-4-0 engine *Invicta* of the Canterbury & Whitstable Railway of 1830. One year later on the same spot two more locomotives were displayed, this time for an engineering exhibition; these were the GNR's impressive new Atlantic engine No 1443, and alongside for comparison the same railway's 4-2-2 engine No 1 of 1870. Both had all the bright metalwork gleaming, even to the buffers, and came by rail to the adjacent goods yard. Also shown there was the 4-4-2 tank engine *Thundersley*, No 80 of the London, Tilbury & Southend Railway, in a rather garish lavender colour and renamed *Southend on Sea* for the occasion.

Olympia continued to provide circuses and exhibitions to the considerable profit of the railway (it was claimed that sometimes 30,000 people used the station in one day). For the circus of 1901 there was



the attraction of a 'performance of educated pigs', for 1902 'Re-enacted scenes of the Boer War', while 1905 saw a Motor Show and 1909 one for aeroplanes; 1911 produced the extraordinary spectacle of Olympia disguised as a cathedral, for a C. B. Cochran production of *The Miracle*. The fragile cars and aeroplanes of the day were unloaded from covered vans in the northwest bay of the station. A new railway facility, introduced in 1906 by the LNWR, was the transport of racing pigeons, and other northern railways soon followed suit. The LNWR converted some 32ft, six-wheeled parcels vans for this, with shelves, racks and sliding doors, and ran trains from the pigeon-loving north every summer.

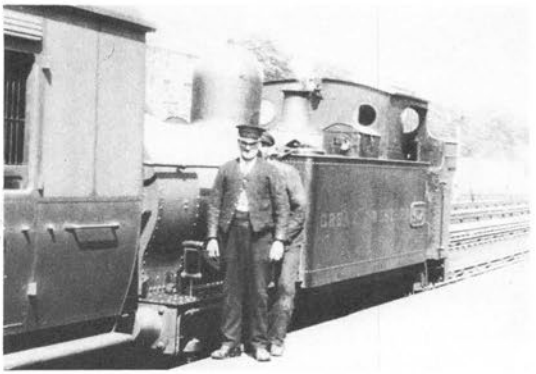
Goods traffic over the line grew steadily, though trains had often to be held to make way for passenger workings, and long double-ended sidings were put in for this both at Lillie Bridge and north of Uxbridge Road. The northern partners also had coal or goods depots of their own in the south and needed to keep them supplied — examples being Falcon Lane, Elephant & Castle, South Lambeth, Wandsworth Road, Brixton, Brockley and New Cross.[9]

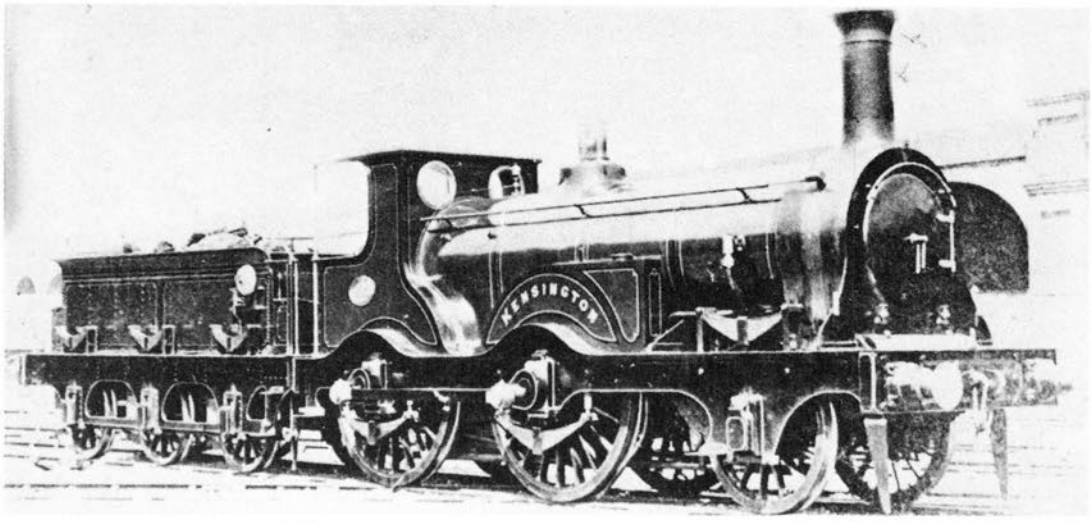
The period 1910-14 saw most services maintained, with a few minor changes. Both of the northern partners put on Wolverhampton-Birmingham-Victoria services in 1910 (by different routes, which must have confused the public) and the short relic of the Middle Circle was shortened still more, running from Edgware Road to Addison Road after 1 November 1910. Even thus shortened, this service proved well patronised and survived for the next 30 years. In 1911 the GWR ceased its Staines-Victoria service, introduced through carriages for Ramsgate and Folkestone (dropped at Greenford and worked forward by SECR tank engines to be attached to

Above:
A Siemens-motored electric motor coach of the LNWR, 1914.

Below:
GWR 2-4-0T No 457 of 1869 on the Greenford-Clapham Junction service in 1930.

Bottom:
A LNWR steam motor train used as a relief train on the Willesden-Earl's Court service 1926-27.

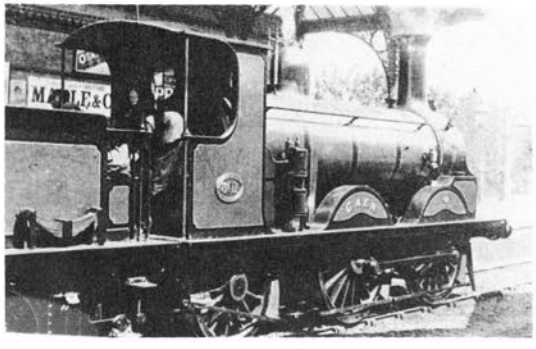


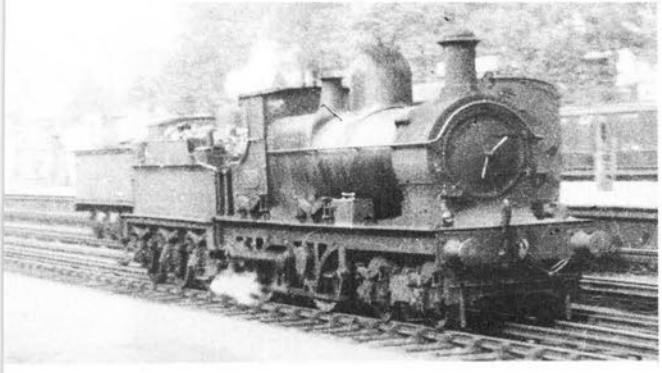


Above:
The Kensington-Brighton passenger service was often hauled by the LBSCR's No 205 *Kensington*, a 2-4-0 of 1872. *Bucknall collection*

Below:
The Brighton company's 0-4-2 No 301 *Caen* of 1877 as used on excursions through Kensington.
Bucknall collection

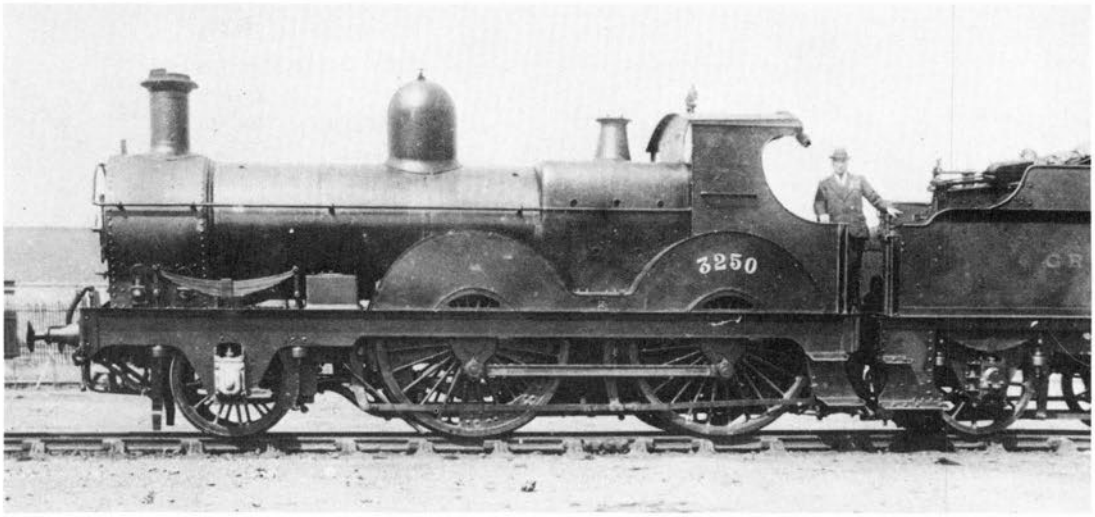
Bottom:
Another passenger engine passing through Kensington (in 1929 here), GWR 4-4-0 No 3550 of 1888, converted from broad-gauge in 1892.





trains at Victoria) and put on a Birkenhead-Victoria service which however only lasted to 1912. The LNWR retained its Wolverhampton-Victoria service of the previous year but added through carriages for Queenborough and Folkestone, but this also was discontinued the next year. These frequent changes and abandonments of through services seemed to show that the holiday travelling public preferred after all to use the regular London termini, though one such service still throve — the regular LNWR and Brighton train basically from Liverpool and Birmingham to Brighton and Eastbourne; started in 1905, it kept running for 10 years, acquiring the name of the 'Sunny South Special'.[10]

In 1913 the GWR withdrew the Sunday Henley-Victoria service, and in 1914 the Willesden-Brighton service ceased; by now two facts were clear — there was less patronage for suburban roundabout routes, and less demand for ingenious cross-London workings of through carriages from the North to the south coast. For both of these changes the motorbus was at least partially responsible. London buses had never been reliable until the introduction of the famous B-type late in 1910, but by 1912 more than 2,000 of these excellent vehicles were on the London streets and the routes they ran covered most of the nearer suburbs — and they connected one terminus with another. The buses, electric trams and tube railways were reshaping the pattern of London travel, and the peripheral lines like the West London were the first to feel it. In fact 1914 developments reflect this very clearly. The GWR tried out a railcar on the Clapham Junction-Addison Road-Uxbridge route, and the LNWR 'went electric'. This was the first step of an ambitious scheme — to electrify the whole of its suburban services — that had been planned as early as 1907 to go as far afield as Watford. When in 1909 the Railway took over the North London Railway the plan was modified to include most of

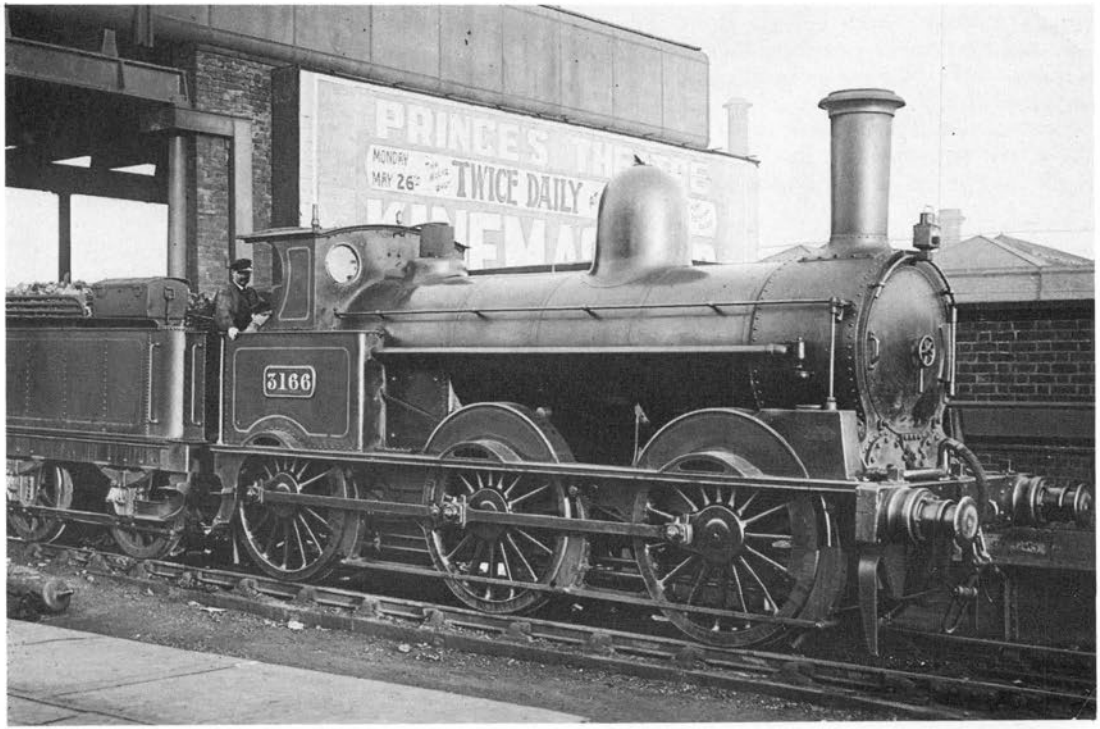


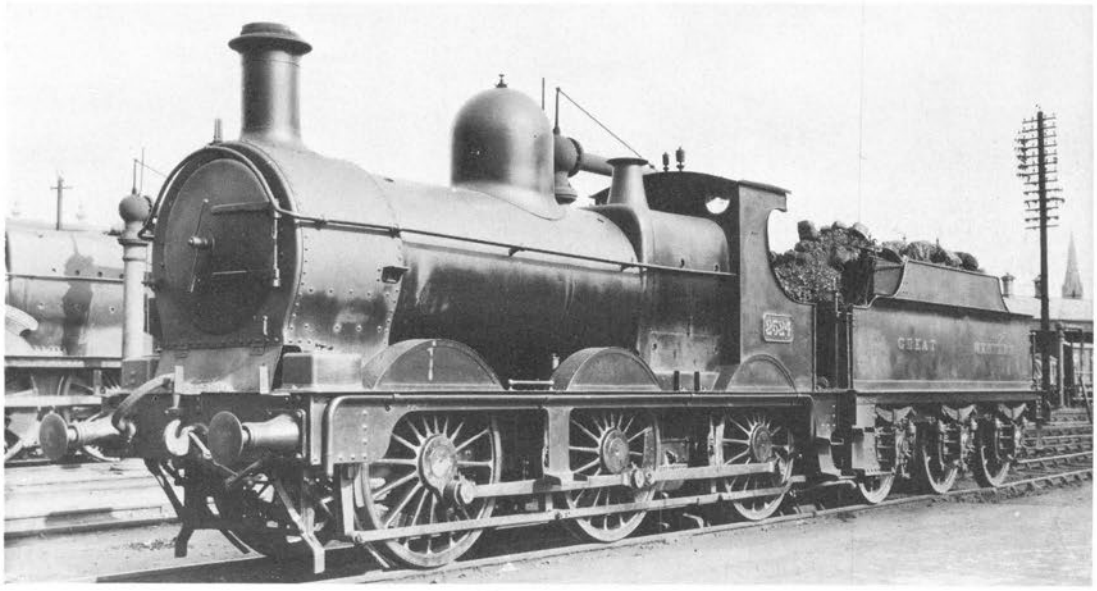
Above:
GWR 2-4-0 No 3250 of 1892 as used on milk trains.
Locomotive Publishing Co

Below:
The 1867 LNWR 0-6-0 No 3166 (ex-1537) hauled exchange goods traffic in the early 1900s.
Bucknall collection

that company's lines, but the first route on which the electric rails were laid was the West London. As this was already partly so equipped (from Uxbridge Road to Addison Road northeast bay, and a short section at Earl's Court Junction) new rails were only required to fill in the gaps, and the work was completed early in 1914. The new Willesden-Earl's Court electric service started on 1 May 1914, at first worked by District Railway stock until the new LNWR trains were ready. These (four three-car sets) took over the service from 22 November 1914.[11]

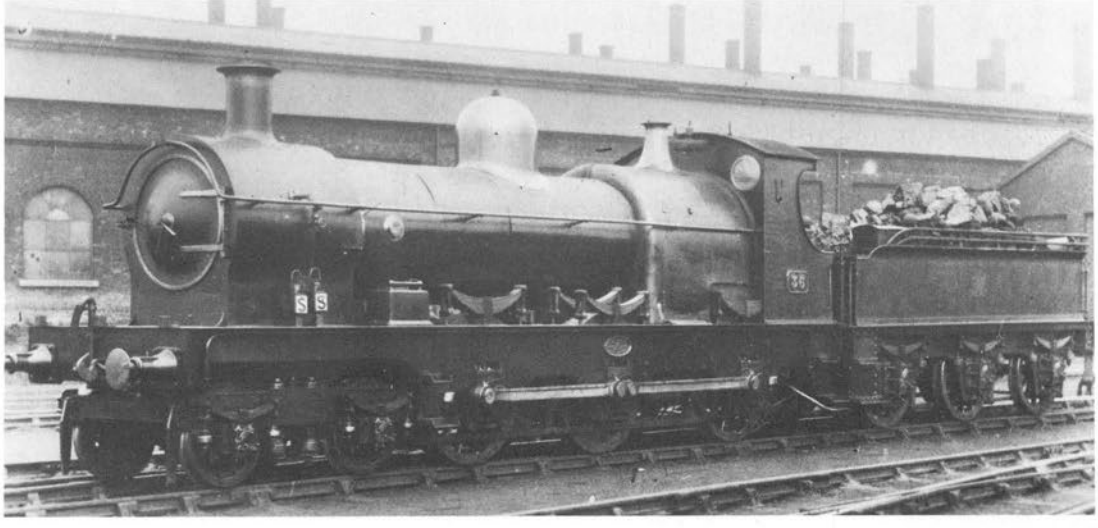
Excursion trains grew in popularity in the early years of the century, especially when corridor carriages became available, and the West London





line saw many of these; the pioneer travel firm of Thomas Cook ran such trains too, for large firms, an example being four trains for the employees of Lever Bros from Liverpool to Folkestone on 17 June 1910. Also of interest, as showing how very large numbers could be moved, an excursion service on 30 June 1911 to bring some 100,000 to Crystal Palace on the invitation of King George V as part of his coronation festivities. Trains of children children from the Great Eastern, LNWR, North London and GWR lines were funnelled through Addison Road in the early morning, while that station itself despatched an additional 23,500 children.

Looking now at the locomotives to be seen on the line at this time, one sees that the era of the 'big engine' had begun, all four parent companies build-



Above left:
An engine on both passenger and goods trains was GWR 0-6-0 No 2524 of 1897. *Locomotive Publishing Co*

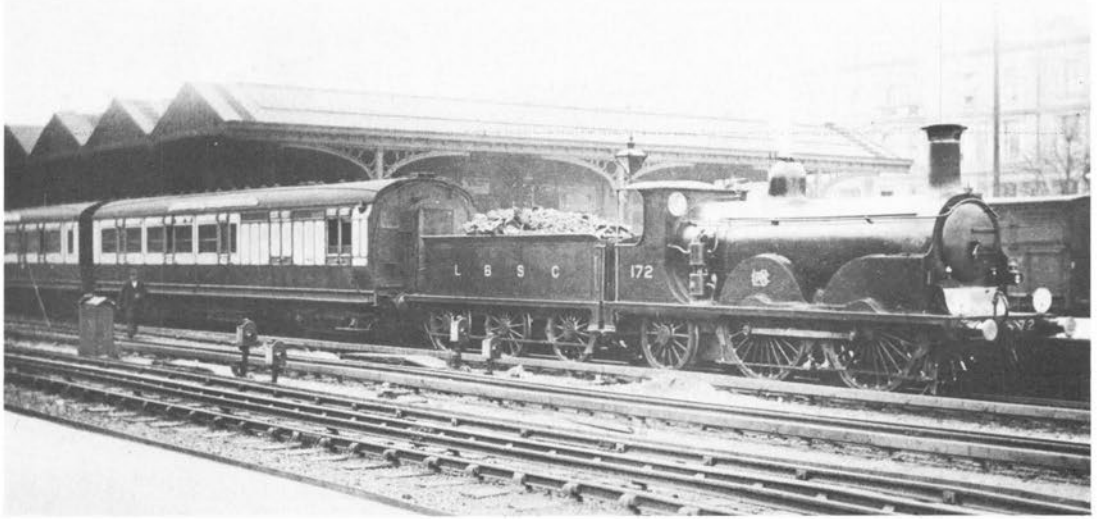
Left:
LBSCR 0-6-0 No 428 of 1884 on a goods train, as used on exchange freight at Lillie Bridge. *Madgwick collection*

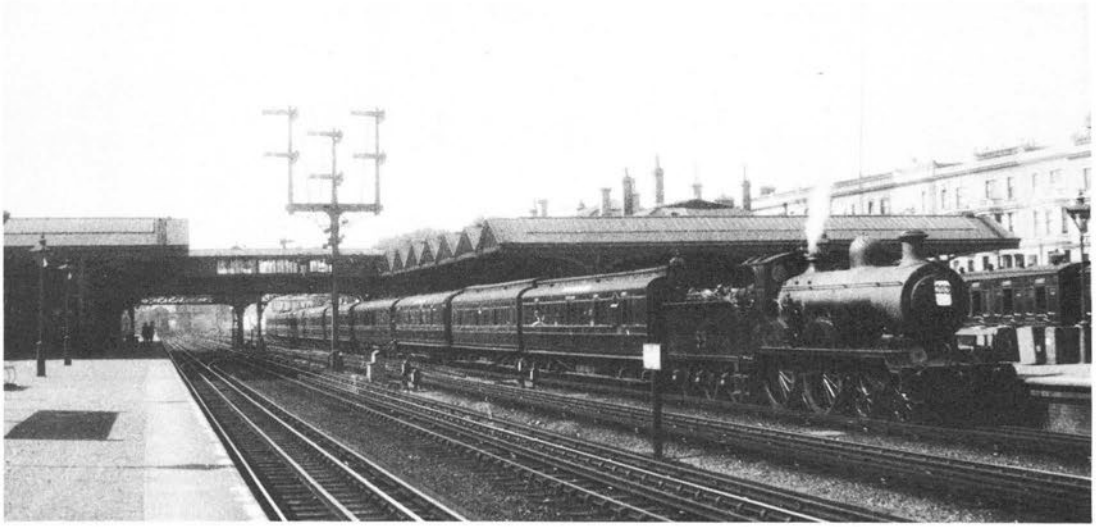
Below left:
The pioneer GWR 4-6-0, No 36 of 1896, worked ballast trains Bassaleg-Lillie Bridge in 1905. *W. J. Reynolds*

Above:
The first postwar 'Sunny South Special' at Kensington in 1922. *E. A. G. Smith*

Below:
Heading a 'Sunny South Special' in 1914 — the LBSCR 0-4-2 No 172 of 1891. *Bucknall collection*

ing 4-4-0 express engines, mostly with large boilers, and three of them 4-4-2 tank engines to match. Whereas previously the West London had seen older (and often very much older) types, now the growth of north-south through services and fierce competition brought the latest of engines and the smartest of trains. The LNWR continued to use mainly its long-lived 0-6-0 classes for goods work, 0-6-2 tank engines for parcels trains, and 2-4-2 tank types for passenger trains, but the long distance trains brought Webb's 'Jubilee' and 'Alfred the Great' class 4-4-0 engines, and later Whale's 'Precursor' class.[12] On the GWR the same tendency showed, with the 4-4-0 'Duke' and 'Bulldog' types appearing frequently and (after 1904) Churchward's outside-cylinder 'County' class. Also to the 4-4-0 ranks came 40 much-rebuilt



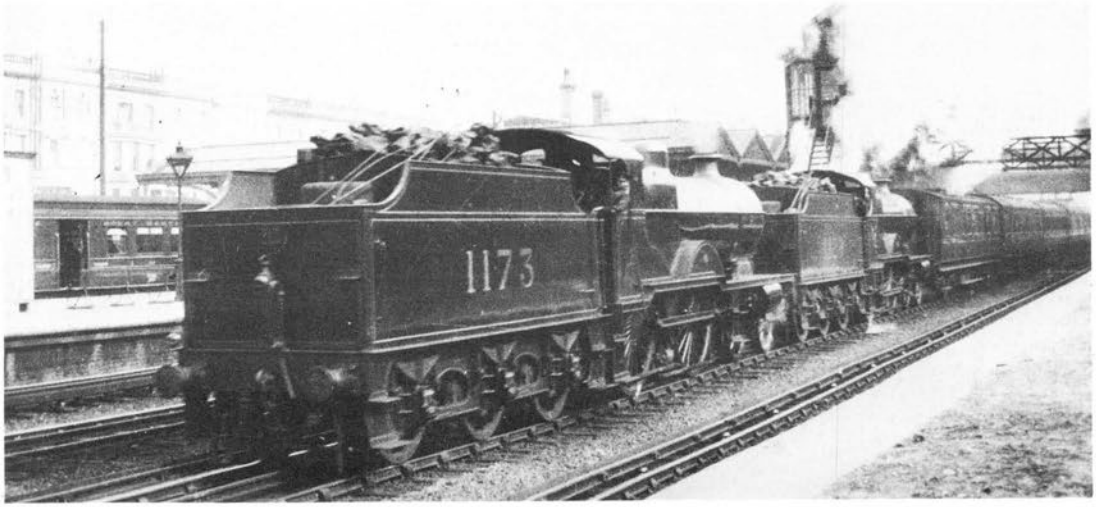


Above:
LMSR coaches were on this 'Sunny South Special' in 1928, with LBSCR 4-4-0 No 59 of 1901 providing the steam.

Below:
Two LMS 4-4-0s, both of 1925, Nos 1173 and 1129 returning with empty stock from a football special in 1929.

0-4-2 and 0-4-4 tank engines in tender form.[13] A few 2-4-0 passenger engines of the 'Barnum' class also visited the line to c1914. The first 4-6-0 passenger engine appeared in 1902, and by 1913 77 'Saints' and 61 'Stars' were handling the heaviest express traffic, and both classes were seen on special trains at Addison Road. Suburban services over the line brought a new class of 2-4-2 tank engines from 1900, with large enclosed, cabs, and (from 1905) 4-4-2 'County Tank' engines. The well tried 2-4-0 tank engines still handled milk and parcels traffic, while for goods trains the familiar 0-6-0 engines were supplemented by 2-6-0 'Aberdare' class inside-cylinder engines from 1900, and by the outside-cylinder '43xx' class from 1911. Furthermore the line saw the pioneer 4-6-0 goods engine No 36 in its last days.[14]

The Brighton line also displayed its latest and best for the new through services, mainly its new 4-4-0 engines in yellow, brown or (Nos 50 and 52) an experimental green.[15] The corresponding class of 4-4-2 tank engines was also increasingly used on express trains, as well as the older 0-4-2 'Gladstone' class.[16]. Suburban services were handled by 0-4-2 tank engines (for many years Nos 222 and 276 ran the 'shuttle') and parcels trains by 0-4-4 or 0-6-2 tank engines. Coal trains were hauled by 0-6-0 goods



engines, sometimes working in pairs.[17] The LSWR used on its part of the 'shuttle' its two types of 0-4-4 tank engine save for a short period around 1903 when two 0-6-0 saddletank engines — Nos 328 and 334 — were tried experimentally. Milk and parcels traffic was handled by the larger 0-4-4 tank class, and through trains by Drummond's 4-4-0 engines of various classes.[18] The SECR used 0-4-4 tank engines of several types for parcels services, one (No 522) working the through carriages of the Deal-Birmingham service in 1908 to Willesden for attachment to express trains there. Occasional excursion trains were worked through by 4-4-0 engines, often by the then 'Royal engine' No 516 in immaculate condition.[19]

A spectacular sight to be seen from time to time on the line around 1910 was the procession of four 'fixed trains' of the Barnum & Bailey circus. This, proclaimed 'The Greatest Show on Earth', was completely rail-borne with permanent living quarters for the staff. The circus used West Brompton goods yard as its base when in London. No less than 67 large bogie units were built, strictly to American pattern, by Renshaw & Co of Stoke on Trent, and nine of these were sleeping and living coaches (with open-end platforms) painted crimson with gold lettering. Others were outsize covered vans painted red and yellow used as sleeping quarters for elephants and tigers. Standard American 'buck-eye' central couplings were used in the trains, only the end-cars having buffers and coupling links. Very large lettering on the van sides gave continuous publicity to the circus, and the trains made a highly colourful display.

A variety of unusual engines passed over the line — in steam or 'dead' — as in previous years, by reason of delivery from builders, sale and so on, and this became so common a traffic that working timetables of 1913 laid down rules for their working if not in steam. Described as 'private owners' engines' they had to be marshalled next to the brake van and not to the train engine. Two of these movements were delivery from northern builders of 60 engines to the South Eastern Railway and 55 to the Brighton Railway.[20]

The summer of 1914 saw a busy holiday traffic streaming through Addison Road station by 'Sunny South Specials' and other holiday trains to the south, even while men of the Territorial Army were marching into the other half of the station for mobilisation. When war was declared there was at first little change in services to be seen, the only one withdrawn being the summer weekend service from Willesden to Brighton. Even the 'Sunny South Special' was to continue for another six months. The general feeling was that 'it would be all over by Christmas'.

The West London lines however had a significant role to play in wartime, and this is described in the next chapter.

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1 There were on the Gloucester Road-Mansion House section trains of the Inner, Middle and Outer Circles, and Ealing, Richmond and Wimbledon lines, and the owning railway could not even find room to run through its own Hounslow line trains. The 3min train interval was certainly a credit to the locomotive men involved.

2 The Willesden-Herne Hill service had been closed the previous year.

3 The slip coach was picked up by a GWR engine at Southall and worked to Addison Road where it was attached to a LNWR train and taken by the London, Chatham & Dover route to Dover. For the return journey the coach had to be worked by the same route to Addison Road, then from Uxbridge Road up the spur to the Hammersmith & City line at Latimer Road and so to Paddington, there to be attached to a down express for Birkenhead.

4 The burrowing line of the Hammersmith & City Railway under the GWR lines at Westbourne Park had to be deepened for the larger rolling stock, and a new surface junction made just east of Royal Oak station.

5 The trains were of the latest type of Metropolitan Railway stock in three-car units, the motor car being fitted with four 150hp motors. They had at first long cream-coloured panels above and below the windows the full length of the coach, but later these were painted over the same colour as the rest of the bodywork. They bore the coat of arms 'H&C' on the sides, and to indicate joint ownership bore the legend 'Metropolitan & Great Western Railways' on one side, and on the other side 'Great Western & Metropolitan Railways'. The normal three-car trains serving Addison Road were increased to six cars during events at Olympia.

6 This may have been due to sheer overcrowding on the LSWR line from Hammersmith (Studland Street Junction) to Turnham Green. When first shared with the District Railway in 1877 the trains of the two companies were of more or less the same performance, but after the electrification of the District line on 1 May 1905 the company's more rapidly accelerating electric trains had to share the lines with the slower steam trains of the South Western's own, and the GWR and Midland services, with consequent delays. The track was quadrupled in 1911 and the electric trains used the southern pair of lines thereafter.

7 As at this time the railway was carrying its peak passenger traffic, amounting to about 4.1million passengers a year, the replacement of the bridge had to be done piecemeal to minimise interruption, not only above but (with 1,200 trains a day passing) also below. The two main girders, each of 180 tons, were built up in permament position on staging at each side of the old bridge. (Each girder was formed of two parallel booms, 23ft in depth, braced together overhead.) The cross-sleeper track over the old bridge was then replaced by one with longitudinal sleepers, enabling trenches to be cut through the ballast and brickwork beneath for the insertion of cross girders

and their riveting up in their final positions. The rail bearers and floor plates were then put in one by one, between trains on successive Sundays.

8 The new signalbox, called Middle box, was found necessary, because of the increased train services needing platform space and using any of the three crossovers provided. With two trains using one platform at a time, it was important to be able to see whether their rear ends cleared the crossovers when they stopped, and this could not be seen from either North Main or South Main box, nor could the movement of engines in run-round operations. The new box was built on narrow steel pillars (made possible by the broad-gauge clearances of the past) and laterally supported by two open-work girders to pillars on the down platform. It controlled the signal gantries on both sides of the footbridge, on both of which small 'call-on' signals were fixed, below the home and distant arms. The use of Middle box divided the station into two short block sections, but it was 'switched out' on Sundays and at night, with the four straight ahead signals lowered, and the station operated as one block section between the north and south cabins.

9 A new kind of goods traffic about this time was the delivery of motor cars, and complete trains of Wolseley chassis were brought from Crayford in 1907 by a South Eastern tank engine and worked forward to Willesden for Birmingham.

10 An idea of the growth in popularity of the 'Sunny South Specials' is given by comparing the trains of 1905 and 1912. The first consisted of one North Western and five Brighton carriages hauled easily by the 0-4-2 engine No 193 *Freemantle*, while the second was so heavy that it had to be double headed by the 2-4-0 engine No 790 *Hardwicke* piloting the 4-4-0 engine No 1360 *Fire Queen*.

11 The new electric coaches set a standard of comfort far above anything seen yet on suburban duty. The carriages were 56ft 11in long and 9ft wide, with central corridors and upholstery and carpeting of express train quality. The inside walls were finished in polished mahogany. Electric lighting, luggage racks, electric heating beneath the seats, roller-blind destination boards, steel plate floors and waist panels, and fire-proofing of all woodwork made the carriages exceptional for their time and set a new standard of comfort for short distance travel that has seldom been exceeded since. The trains had the further quality of being quite the quietest running electric trains ever built. They were assembled in three-car sets of motor, trailer and control trailer, the latter two adding '300' and '600' respectively to the motor car number, the first set train being thus numbered 1E-301E-601E. Three sets 1E-3E were built by the Metropolitan Carriage, Wagon & Finance Co and delivered in August 1914, while the 4E set was built by the LNWR at Wolverton and tested on the line in November 1914. These four sets were equipped with Siemens electrical gear, but in view of the war the further sets on order turned to neutral Switzerland for their gear, which was supplied by the Oerlikon firm. As the electric current had to be brought for the moment from two different supply sources (the company's own generating station at Stonebridge Park was not ready until 1916) there was a break or 'dead' section at the centre of the Addison Road through platforms. South of this the current came from the underground from Lots Road, north of it from the GWR at Park Royal. Two white lines were therefore painted on the platforms opposite the driver's cabin which had to be avoided to prevent the train from being stranded.

12 One of this class — No 7 *Titan* — was in 1909 tested against the Brighton 4-4-2 tank engines Nos 23 and 26 to evaluate the results of the latter's superheating, through runs of the 'Sunny South Special' being made by the engines from Brighton to Birmingham. The fuel (and water) consumption of the superheated engines, found to burn 27lb of coal per mile to the 35lb of the other, was so economical that superheating was rapidly adopted at Crewe thereafter.

13 The 0-4-2 tank engines Nos 3521-59 all ran unsteadily to a dangerous degree, and were converted to 0-4-4 wheel arrangement to improve the ride. However they were still unsteady in this form, and the unusual step was taken of 'reversing' them — the boiler being turned round on the frame and a tender added, to make a light 4-4-0 class. In this form they ran excellently, and were often seen on the West London line over the next 30 years. Half of the class had been broad-gauge engines from 1888 to 1892 (Nos 3541-60), the last one being built as an 0-4-4 tank engine before conversion.

14 The pioneer GWR 4-6-0 engine No 36 was used regularly from 1903 on ballast trains from Bassaleg in South Wales to Lillie Bridge sidings until 1905, when its firebox failed completely on a returning empties run and it had to be towed away for scrap.

15 Of the 4-4-0 engines, Nos 42 *His Majesty*, 50 *Tasmania*, 52 *Siemens*, 68 *Marlborough* and (of an older class) 213 *Bessemer* and 323 *William Cubitt* were used regularly on the through services. *His Majesty* also worked a theatrical special from Victoria to Liverpool on 29 December 1901.

16 'Gladstone' class 0-4-2 engines regularly used were Nos 172 *Littlehampton*, 193 *Freemantle* and 186 *De la Warr*, this last also making a run in 1906 from Brighton to Liverpool and back to test oil-burning equipment fitted.

17 As trains of locomotive coal from the GWR line became heavier and heavier, two Brighton 0-6-0 goods engines were usually stationed at Westbourne Park engine shed and took over the 800ton coal trains which proved rather beyond their capacity, with consequent delays to other traffic. From 1908 these were replaced by the larger-boilered 'C2' class.

18 The LSWR's contribution to the Clapham Junction 'shuttle' remained (after the experiment with the 0-6-0 saddletank engines in 1903) firmly in the hands of the 0-4-4 tank engines of the '02' class. One of this class (No 180) ran experimentally on the service with oil-burning equipment in 1902, and later the service was mainly maintained by a pair (Nos 207 and 208) until after the war.

19 A South Eastern & Chatham Railway 4-4-0 engine, No 470, worked a through train on to the LNWR line from Dover on 15 April 1907.

20 30 0-6-0s and 30 4-4-0s for the SECR, and 25 0-6-0s, 25 4-4-0s and five 4-4-2s for the LBSCR. An odd visitor from the LSWR was the diminutive 0-4-0 tank engine No 83, sent to Earl's Court Exhibition in 1907 to form part of an armoured train on display there.

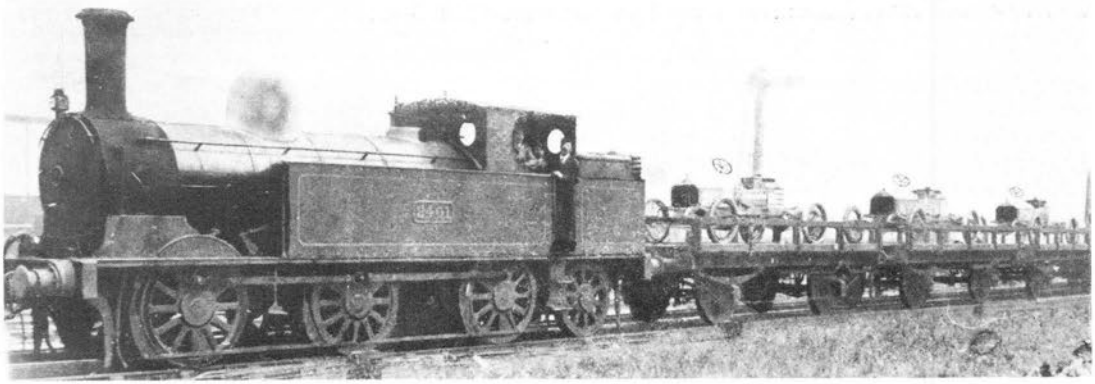
5
World War 1 and the Railways Act: 1914-22

World War 1 started, most inconveniently for the railways and the travelling public, on an August holiday weekend, when railway resources were fully extended. No only had holidaymakers to be got home, but very large numbers of Territorial Army men had to be brought back hurriedly from their summer camps and some Regular Army units returned to their depots. That the railway companies were able to adjust so quickly to the new situation was due largely to the careful previous planning which had led to the formation of the Railway Executive Committee in 1912. An earlier scheme, in 1904, had planned what were called Secretary Companies, railway companies designated to co-ordinate movements in their area. Thus the South Eastern & Chatham Railway (SECR) was Secretary Company for the Army's Eastern Command (which at that time included London). This system did not entirely work in the first and busiest months of war movements, when the Command concerned often dealt directly with the company which entrained its men, but it was later carried out to good effect, the LNWR taking over as Secretary Company from the SECR.

From the very beginning Addison Road station was involved, troops entraining at the west side platforms, in special trains, day and night. Prepared timetables went into effect but at first there were con-

Above:
Troops entraining 4 August 1914.

Below:
These Napier car chassis were moved from Kensington in 1916 as part of the line's military traffic. The locomotive is LNWR 0-6-2T No 2461 of 1882.
Railway Gazette (1916)



flicting movements; mobilisation meant moving men to depots, but at the same time the Expeditionary Force had to be got to ports of embarkation. Mobilisation proved to need the greatest number of trains (it included gathering in huge numbers of horses as well as of men) and took a fortnight, and there was some delay to outgoing troops. Nevertheless the first BEF train reached Southampton on 10 August 1914 and thereafter movement of the force was rapid.[1]

It would be hard to overestimate the importance of the West London line during the war. As the only route to the south for the LNWR, and the principal one for the GWR, it served the most important war ports — Portsmouth, Littlehampton, Newhaven, Folkestone, Dover, Richborough and Sheerness.[2] Heavy and out-of-gauge loads had to use the line, including extra trains of coal for the SECR line. Ambulance trains, with their long corridor carriages, could not use the East London or Farringdon Street links. The line could also handle traffic to the LSWR (though more would go via Kew) by reversal through Hammersmith (Grove Road).[3] LNWR records show that between 2 August and 30 September 1914 it ran 2,465 special trains for troops, stores, prisoners and refugees, many of which used the West London route. In October there were heavy arrivals of Belgian refugees from Ostende, of whom seven trains passed through on 15 October, two of them unloading at Addison Road 888 adults and 415 children for housing in the Earl's Court exhibition buildings.

Ambulance trains had been built by several railways to government order to a plan worked out in 1910. Three built by the LNWR were ready within a few days of the outbreak of war, the first being sent from Wolverton through Addison Road to Chatham as early as 8 August.[4] By October casualties were coming through Addison Road from Southampton, though later Dover became the main port and

Top:
GWR 2-6-0 No 6373 of 1922 with a LMS military special in 1929 from Weedon.

Above:
1926 — field guns being loaded in the northwest bay at Kensington.

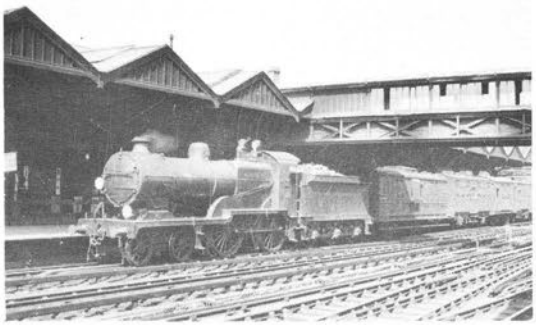
Charing Cross the main distributing point for London.[5] Nor did the trains merely 'bring and dump' the wounded — a lot had to be moved between hospitals, which only ambulance trains could do.[6] By 1917, when the slaughter was at its height, trains of wounded were arriving at Addison Road sometimes at the rate of five a day, and as a small boy glued to a window looking down on to the down platform I could watch the detraining and transfer of the wounded into fleets of spindly Model T Ford ambulances with canvas bodywork, assembled in the yard and backed up to the train doors. Chelsea station was occasionally so used.

Many sites and buildings along the line were taken into war use. Mitre Bridge sleeper depot handled remarshalling of vans and aeroplane parts, Wormwood Scrubs as an airship base, and at White City aeroplanes were assembled and packed (with only

the wings detached) in covered vans in the goods yard below.[7] Olympia at first housed German prisoners, then army clothing. Earl's Court Exhibition Hall (which had closed in 1913) was used for refugees and as a balloon depot, served by the Warwick Road goods yard. Lillie Bridge became a key assembly point for remarshalling supply trains, Brompton & Fulham depot handled the overflow of stores from the White City brought there by road, Chelsea Dock had to have new sidings laid to cope with coal traffic, and Falcon Lane — the small out-of-territory LNWR coal depot at Clapham Junction — was also used. Addison Road station itself provided considerable loading facilities, and in 1917 newly manufactured Napier motorcars from the firm's Acton works were being loaded on special trains of flat trucks in the northwest bay.

Below:
SECR 4-4-0 No 497 of 1907 on a 1930 military special to Canterbury.

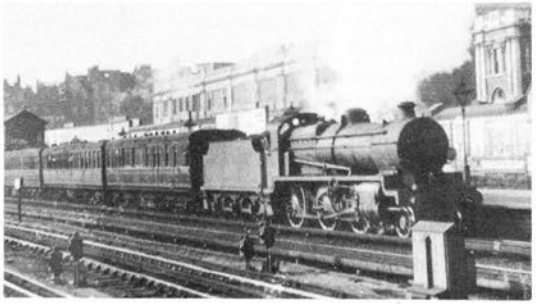
Bottom:
Troops forming squads in 1930 for entraining into old GCR stock at Kensington.

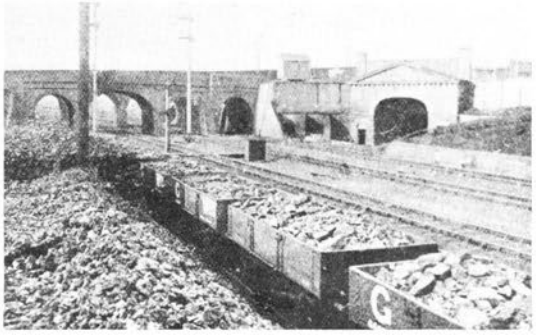


Bearing in mind all this wartime use, it is surprising that the line retained as much passenger traffic as it did. The full Edgware Road-Addison Road, Willesden-Earl's Court, and Addison Road-Clapham Junction services continued, and even the purely holiday 'Sunny South Special' continued to run until March 1915. The long-lived Southall-Victoria service survived until 12 July 1915, and the Euston-Crystal Palace and Euston-Victoria services lasted into 1917. The LSWR services over the Hammersmith branch ended in June 1916, never to be revived, and there were some other small economies.[8]

It is consoling to note that, when things were going badly, the possibility of enemy invasion was seriously considered and plans drawn up for the strategic use of railways should this occur. These produced 'standard routes and timings' for the whole country, with the British Isles divided into seven Forward and two Rearward Sectors.[9] The whole scheme, though it never had the test of being implemented, remains a text-book example of good military planning.

Given the strategic importance of the West London line, it is surprising that it did not receive more enemy attention than it did. Damage was done by our own unexploded anti-aircraft shells, one of which damaged the track at North Pole Junction and another embedded itself beside the southwest bay of





Top:
Southern Railway 2-6-0 with train of GCR stock for troops in 1929.

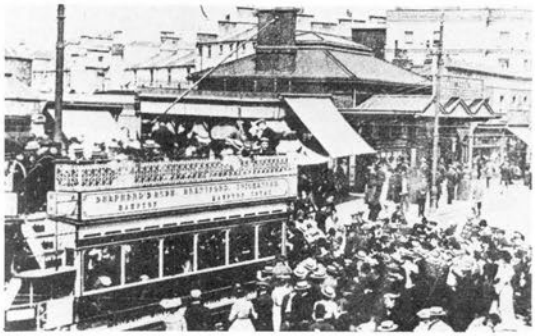
Above:
This is the brick bridge of 1860 at Mitre Bridge seen through the arches of Scrubs Lane Bridge.
GWR Magazine

Below:
The Addison Gardens bridge of 1878; the large block of flats is on the site of the LSWR line to Richmond.

Addison Road. (I watched with awe as a solitary policeman guarded the spot till it could be defused.) Only once was the line apparently a specific object of attack, and that was in full daylight on 19 May 1918. German bombers flew straight down the line but dropped their bombs only at the two ends — one on the West London carriage sidings and the other on Platform 12 of Clapham Junction station. I recall well the roar of their passing and the gunfire that greeted them, as the station porters dived for cover into the nearest milk van in the northwest bay.

'Black-out', so important in World War 2, was not treated very seriously. The LNWR electric trains had roller-blinds for their windows that were supposed to be pulled down at night and only raised for stations. This regulation — like the one requiring engine firemen not to open their firebox doors except under cover — was seldom observed. Locomotives standing while the fires were banked up for more steam to climb the North Pole bank spread a vivid orange glow. I believe instructions were later given for tarpaulin sheets to be slung between cab-roof and tender, but I never saw an engine so rigged.

As more and more of the country's industry was geared to war production there developed a shortage of goods wagons. Well over one million standard open wagons were in existence (about half in private ownership) but many users retained them for long periods as a storage facility, usually ignoring demurrage charges. Even when released after unloading, wagons were usually worked back empty to their owning lines or firms, or simply put in sidings to accumulate.[10] Not until April 1917 was a partial 'common user' system imposed to avoid unnecessary working back of empty wagons, but even when this



Top:
A horse tram in 1874, serving Uxbridge Road station.

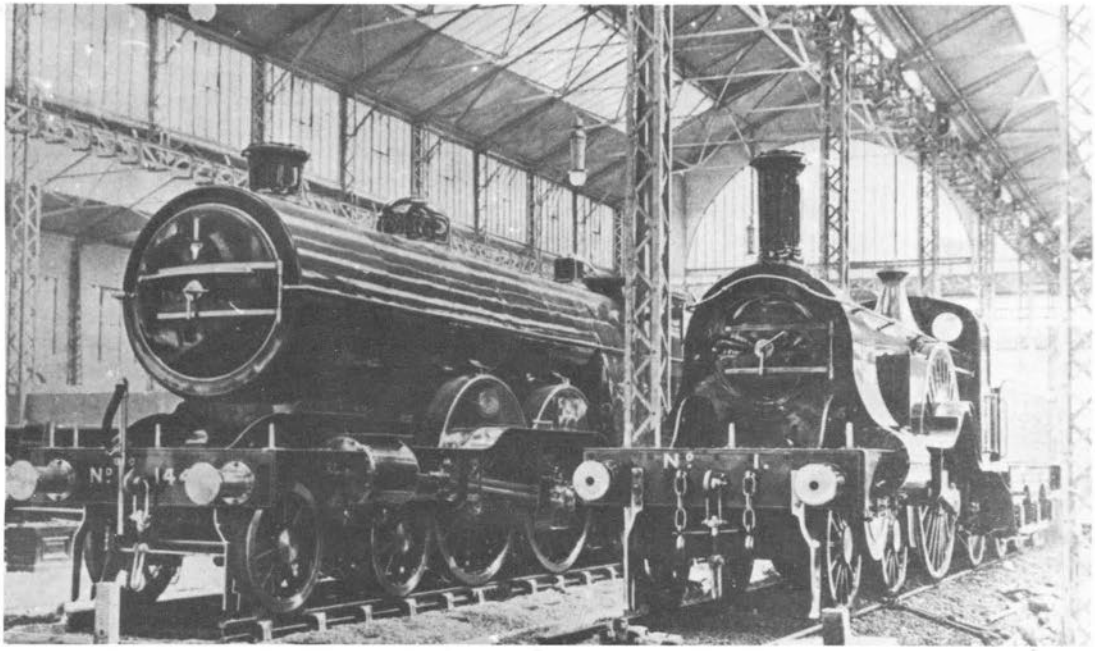
Above:
The LUET electric tram terminus at Uxbridge Road station in 1903.

was tightened up in April 1918 it was still abused; all too many wagon owners painted 'Not Common User' on their property.

By 1917 staff shotages had become acute on the railways. By then 142,862 railwaymen had enlisted, hampering just about all the railways (even the West London, with a minute staff of its own, contributed seven). By the end of the war 184,475 railwaymen had enlisted, about one-third of the total strength. Of these, 21,522 died.

From 1917 military trains through Addison Road averaged some 24 a day, of which 15 would be munitions and stores, five troop trains, and four ambulance trains.[11] Most LNWR and GWR trains worked to Lillie Bridge, where long goods loop sidings were available for remarshalling. There, Brighton engines took over the trains for Littlehampton and Newhaven, and SECR engines those for Folkestone, Dover and (increasingly) Richborough, in which task they were helped by the powerful engines loaned by the Hull & Barnsley Railway. There was a daily munitions train from one factory alone at Hayes to Richborough, so heavy that it had to be double headed by a pair of SECR goods engines even in the up (downhill) direction.[12] Such trains had to be regularly halted for axlebox inspections (no less than seven times, for example, between Carlisle and London), and all for the West London line had to halt at Mitre Bridge and proceed 'only after conferring with the driver and putting down as many Waggon Breaks according to weather' (the LNWR always spelt 'breaks' this way).[13] Enginemen wanting a relief, or a pilot engine, were ordered to halt at Willesden and 'on coming to a stand give three crows'. Enginemen on northbound trains needing assistance had to stop at Addison Road and take an 'assistant engine' on the front, unless they were GWR trains, which were allowed banking in the rear. The LNWR's working timetable for June 1918 (a book 4in thick) gives details of trains working under the general description of 'Government Stores' but makes some curious distinctions in their handling; one goods train was always specially marked 'to be signalled as express passenger train' from Willesden main line to Cannon Street.

Turning now to the engines to be seen on the line in wartime, the variety was of course enormous — in the first war months enginemen had to be prepared to go on to 'foreign' lines at the moment's notice. Examples of this were a Brighton 0-6-0 goods engine, No 430, working a troop train to Peterborough in 1914, and the same company's 4-4-0 engine No 54 seen at Harringay in 1915, and a SECR 4-4-0 engine (No 491) taking a northbound hospital train on to the Great Eastern line piloted by the LNWR 0-6-0 goods engine No 22. Of the 'home' companies almost every type of engine was to be seen in Addison Road sooner or later and of the LNWR I noted 4-6-0 and 4-4-0 types (the latter often double-heading northbound), 0-8-0 goods engines and every variety of 0-6-0 type. The local traffic brought 0-6-2 and 2-4-2 tank engines as previously, now supplemented occasionally by the large 4-4-2 express tank engines on parcels trains. From the GWR came both 'Saint' and 'Star' 4-6-0 classes, both inside and outside-framed 2-6-0 and 0-6-0 goods engines, and almost any variety of the 4-4-0 type. These included elderly machines built for the broad-gauge but converted, and the 'Duke', 'Bulldog' and 'City' classes right up to the new outside-cylinder 'County' class. A surprise visitor very far from home was the 0-6-0 saddletank engine No 1311 *Cheesewring*, built for the Liskeard & Looe Railway in 1864 and then, over 50 years old, kept in Old Oak Common sheds for local duties in 1918-9. Tank engines on suburban services and parcels trains were much the same as prewar, (0-4-2, 2-4-0 and 0-6-0 types), while on milk traffic were also the larger 2-4-2 and 4-4-2 tank engines, a contrast to the earlier types because of their roomy drivers' cabs. From the Brighton line came occasional 4-4-0 express engines, and the corresponding 4-4-2 type of tank engine which often handled very heavy troop trains. Goods, coal, and munitions trains were hauled by the latest class of 0-6-0 goods engines; one of these (No 536), on a

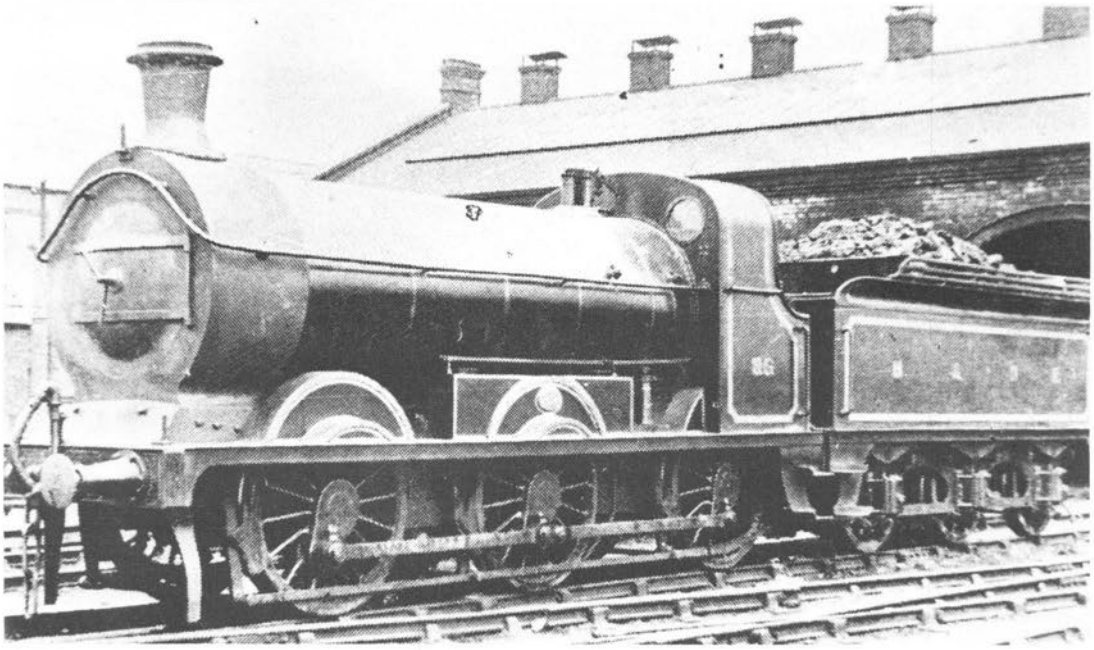


munitions train from Lillie Bridge for Newhaven with 39 wagons of high explosive, collided inside Redhill Tunnel with the rear of a stalled goods train. The whole train was derailed and its contents piled up to the crown of the tunnel, but — perhaps for lack of air — there was no fire, and a catastrophe which might have been of Silvertown proportions was averted. Later this traffic was taken over by new 2-6-0 goods engines — these had been so much needed that the Government permitted five more of them to be built in 1916. As before, 0-4-2 and 0-4-4 tank engines carried on the suburban services, and on one occasion the 4-6-2 tank engine No 326 *Bessborough* was seen working an ambulance train. The LSWR's engines were mostly of the 0-4-4 tank type, the small pair, Nos 207 and 208 working the Clapham Junction service, the larger type handling parcels trains. Two (Nos 129 and 0487) of the old 4-4-2 well-tank engines (a type superseded by electric trains on so many branches in 1915), remained at Clapham Junction on shunting duties and occasionally appeared at Addison Road. Some 'Jubilee' 0-4-2 engines, fitted with Westinghouse brakes, worked military trains along with several classes of 4-4-0 type.

SECR engines were much more numerous than they had been before the war, by reason of the heavy wartime goods traffic they took over at Lillie Bridge, Old Oak Common or Willesden. Nearly all were of the 0-6-0 goods type, sometimes working in pairs. There were also 0-4-4 tank engines on parcels services as before. For troop trains came 4-4-0 engines, mostly in wartime grey but occasionally in the beautiful green livery of the line in peacetime. Of

'foreign' engines, the 10 Hull & Barnsley Railway 0-6-0 goods engines have been mentioned (they were Nos 71, 73-4, 77, 79, 82-3 and 85-7) and there were occasional visits by a GNR 0-6-2 tank engine (No 1572) and by a Glasgow & South Western Railway 0-6-0 goods engine which was on loan to the GWR and stationed at Old Oak Common shed. One North London Railway engine of great antiquity regularly worked in on parcels traffic. It was a 4-4-0 inside-cylinder tank engine, No 109. Built at Bow in 1865, it must have been one of the oldest engines working in London.

It remains to note the one piece of engineering work on the line in the war; this was the laying of double line at Viaduct Junction to the Ealing & Shepherds Bush Railway in 1917 (it had formerly been only a single-track contractor's line from 1908). It now provided a useful through link to the GWR Birmingham line, avoiding the main line at Old Oak Common.



Above left:
An unusual pair of visitors to the line were the GNR's 4-4-2 No 1443 of 1910 and 4-2-2 No 1 of 1870, on exhibition at the White City in 1911.

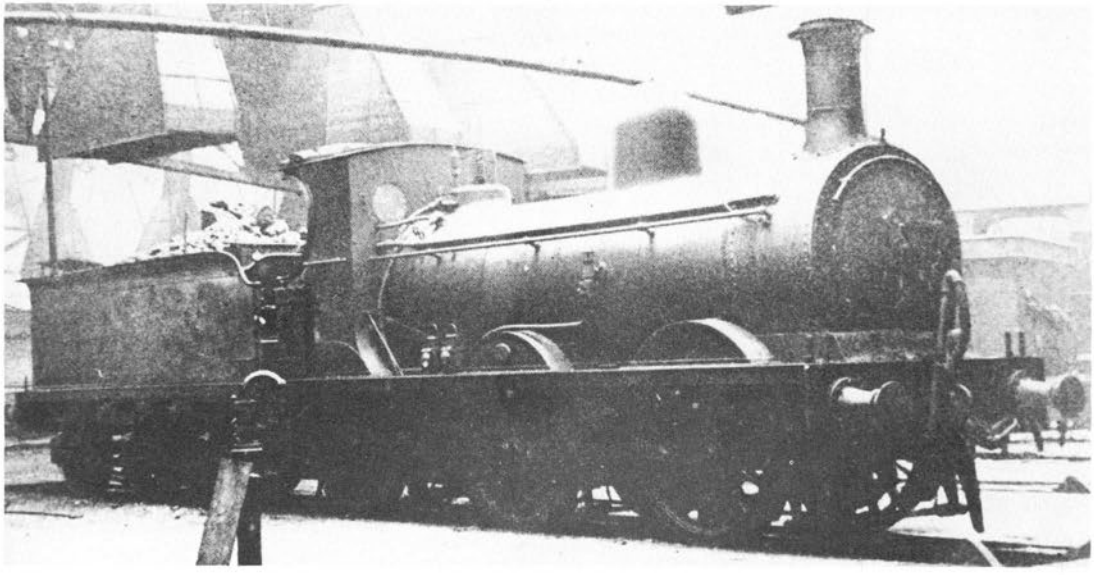
Left:
These private hire Metropolitan buses for excursion are standing at Kensington's east-side buildings.

Above:
A real 'stranger' — Hull & Barnsley 0-6-0 No 86 of 1900 on loan 1916-19 to the SECR.

The end of the war still left the railways with problems. Large numbers of troops had to be brought home, for leave or demobilisation.[14] The figure of 1,033 troop trains northbound in 1919 is partly balanced by 672 southbound trains taking them back. So many troops and sailors were arriving at Euston to go back to duty that from February to June 1919 the LNWR had 274 troop trains from there via Addison Road to Folkstone, sometimes five trains in a day. Refugees too were returned to Belgium, entrained at Addison Road in March and April 1919. Only by mid-1919 were the railways getting back to anything like normal. Peace Day that year (celebrated by the Addison Road station staff by lavish decoration of their small fleet of motor lorries with flags and bunting) found the railways facing shortages and difficulties everywhere. Food was still rationed, an unprecedented epidemic of influenza killed thousands, unemployment faced discharged soldiers, and — to cap it all — there was a railway strike. This, from 26 September to 5 October 1919 was on the issue of whether wartime bonus payments, so long a part of the railwaymen's pay packet, should be continued. In the end they were, but the 10-day strike lost traffic to the railways that was never to be regained; thousands of returned war motor lorries, in the hands of thousands of returned drivers, were ready to fetch and carry from door to door — and did so.

The strike was almost complete. At Addison Road I remember near-total silence, broken only once by a southbound goods train in the charge of a GWR 0-6-0 pannier-tank engine running at a good pace (but against signals); a coupling to the first wagon broke, so that the engine leaped ahead. The driver braked slightly, to let the train catch up, then neatly dropped the engine's own link over the hook and carried on. It left me rather spellbound as I watched.

Over the next few years it was clear that the old need for round-London surburban services was no longer there. No one wanted any more to go from Richmond to Ludgate Hill by an hour's journey of 15 miles to cover seven, nor from Southall to Victoria, nor from Willesden to Croydon. The lines from Addison Road to Shepherds Bush and Hammersmith rusted away lost in deep grass. Olympia however reopened, and brought welcome traffic to the line. In 1919 the first Royal Tournament there brought a platoon of huge ungainly tanks to the station; they were unloaded in the northwest bay and ground their way over the streets with much destruction of asphalt. Over the next few years the Tournament was repeated, and there were exhibitions for motor cars, commercial vehicles, shipping and engineering, and the *Daily Mail's* 'Efficiency



Above:
Another wartime loan was the GSWR's 0-6-0 run by the GWR in 1917.

Exhibition' (which in later years was more attractively named 'Ideal Home'). There were boxing matches, dog shows and horse shows, all bringing business, and extra trains were provided or short ones doubled.

Long distance through passenger traffic revived only slowly; there was a LNWR excursion to Hastings, worked right through by the 'Prince of Wales' class 4-6-0 engine No 242 in 1920, while in December 1921 the old 'Sunny South Special' made a welcome reappearance, hauled for the occasion by the Brighton 4-4-0 express engine No 171. To this service was added in June 1922 the 'Kent Coast Express', the coaches from Liverpool and Manchester for Ramsgate Harbour being taken over at Willesden by the South Eastern engine (almost always the 4-4-0 enigne No 502, in wartime grey still). Over the next few years both trains varied in frequency, sometimes daily, sometimes weekly, but at the height of the summer season the loading could be very heavy indeed, sometimes three trains for Eastbourne and two for the Kent Coast.

Some unusual workings were trains of new electric rolling stock for the District and the London Electric Railways. Trains of District Class F stock from the makers to Lillie Bridge were seen in 1920 — elliptical-roofed carriages with oval end-windows and painted a dark crimson. New LNWR-London Electric Railway 'joint stock', tube-sized and painted in LNWR colours for the new extension of the Bakerloo Line, worked through from Croxley Green via Willesden and Earl's Court to Acton depot on 15 January 1921. It ran under its own power, and returned the same way on 21 February. The local services remained unchanged — the Brighton share of the trains now being worked by the 0-4-2 tank engines Nos 222 and 276, the LSWR by the 0-4-4 tank engines Nos 207 and 208.

At the end of 1922 the independent existence of the railways came to an end, and in the next chapter working under the Grouping will be described.

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1 In seven days 334 trains had brought over 69,000 troops and 21,000 horses and their equipment to ports of embarkation; and by the end of the month the figures were 670 trains and 118,000 men.

2 It also served as a secondary or relief route to these places from the GER (by Stratford, Victoria Park and the North London line) and for the GNR (by Canonbury Junction).

3 In the first days of August, when so many troop trains were passing through Addison Road southwards, some of them were reversed on to the Hammersmith (Grove Road) line to relieve the pressure on Clapham Junction. A nice sidelight on the courteous attitude on railways to their patrons is given by a poster (now to be seen in the Imperial War Museum) giving — well in advance — the exact timings of local trains that would have to be cancelled, very early one Sunday morning, to make way for troops. Nobody thought of security then compared with the convenience of a few very early Sunday morning passengers who might want to go the few miles from Hammersmith to Richmond.

4 This was for the Royal Navy and, true to tradition, had to be differently fitted out so that the wounded could hang in hammock cots from the roof, whereas for the Army they lay on shelves.

5 Carrying on the account of these trains for the moment, by 1917 they had grown to a massively major traffic. The figures of trains for the years 1917-19 are:

	North to South		South to North	
Year	*Full*	*Empty*	*Full*	*Empty*
1917 (11 months)	8	811	864	3
1918	118	880	990	35
1919	9	272	251	4
Total	135	1,963	2,105	42

So good did the service become that by 1917 it was claimed that a man could be brought to England on the same day as he had been wounded.

6 One detail for a Dover to Bristol ambulance train reads:

'Ambulance Boat *Jan Breydel*. Berth No 2. Train No 16. To carry Canadians to Taplow, thence to Bristol Temple Meads with 100 cot and 60 standing cases, together with 3 cot patients picked up at Addison Road for transfer Temple Meads. Returning stop at Taplow to set down 5 cot Canadians and at Addison Road to set down one cot Canadian.'

7 The White City was well served by the Shepherds Bush goods yard beneath it, which over the years had grown from the three sidings of Stephenson's coal depot to 20 well-spaced lines covering a large area.

8 A Greenford-Addison Road 'railcar' service of the GWR was withdrawn on 22 March 1915, and the Brighton and LSWR companies agreed to share Sunday service on the Clapham Junction shuttle service alternate weeks in 1915. The Metropolitan Railway experimented with a single coach on the Edgware Road service, using for the purpose two compartment-type carriages rebuilt after an accident in 1910. In this form the two carriages — Nos 46 and 69 — had a motorman's cab at each end and were driven by four 150hp motors. They entered this service on 12 May 1918 but proved too small for the traffic, and later were coupled to two standard Hammersmith & City electric coaches to form the customary three-car train. The LSWR also experimented in 1916 with a smaller train on the Clapham Junction service, using a push-and-pull unit of two bogie coaches and the engine in the middle, but by the next year it had reverted to the normal train for this service. The Sunday service ended on 28 April 1918.

9 Standard routes and timetables were worked out from a Common Station to any likely detraining station. Common Stations were points farthest away from the operational area that could still accept trains from the Entraining Stations (usually in the Rearward Sector) and either re-entrain the troops in special trains or simply attach coaches to them. The four most important Common Stations were in London Addison Road, Acton Wells, South Tottenham and Victoria Park. A series of times from Addison Road based on zero hour was worked out and — perhaps optimistically — a 10min interval promised if called for. A rather larger number of stations were designated Troop Regulating Stations, and Addison Road had this and Collecting Centre status as well. A later refinement was a code of standard engine workings, specifying what company would provide engines for particular standard routes.

10 The worst offender in this was the LSWR, found to have so many empty wagons put away in remote sidings that emergency measures had to be taken to get them out and back into circulation. Over 8,000 were removed in one week, and as so many of these had to come back by the West London line that the normal maximum loading of 38 wagons for the climb to the North Pole Junction was relaxed, and permission also given for any two LNWR or any two GWR goods trains to couple up at Lillie Bridge and work (under a special bell-signal, 3-2-3) as a single train to Willesden or Old Oak Common. The instruction added that 'specials with rough or unimportant traffic not admitted to Willesden in the evenings'.

11 The 'Stores Trains' included those for coal, guns, limbers, tents, oil, food and clothing in very large quantities, and after 1917 tanks, which occupied one truck apiece. More than 2,000 of these were built in the north and sent down to the southern ports.

12 Figures of monthly totals, at three-month intervals, are of interest:

Month	**Ammunition**	**General Stores**
April 1917	119	63
July 1917	155	82
October 1917	149	69
April 1918	134	93
July 1918	179	67
October 1918	204	69

These were trains specifically using the West London line.

As early as March 1916 some supply and munitions trains were so heavy that their GWR or LNWR engines were working them through to Norwood Junction or Three Bridges. Until the new Brighton 'Moguls' were built, the LNWR 0-8-0 goods engines were used, the load being too great for 0-6-0 engines of either of the southern railways concerned.

13 The parent companies laid down detailed restrictions on the number of wagons per train, the northbound figure always less than the south. The normal northward allowance was 38 10 ton four-wheeled wagons, but SECR engines were allowed to haul 55 as far as Shepherds Bush, and 45 on to Willesden provided that the larger 'C' class 0-6-0 engines were used. For the smaller 'O' type the numbers were 45 and 35. At night, perhaps because a longer clear approach run could be expected, trains of 59 wagons were allowed.

14 Over 6,000 troop trains ran through Addison Road in the period 1917-19 and details are as follows:

	North to South		South to North	
Year	*Loaded*	*Empty*	*Loaded*	*Empty*
1917	347	47	65	322
1918	428	210	260	408
1919	672	1,001	1,033	1,245

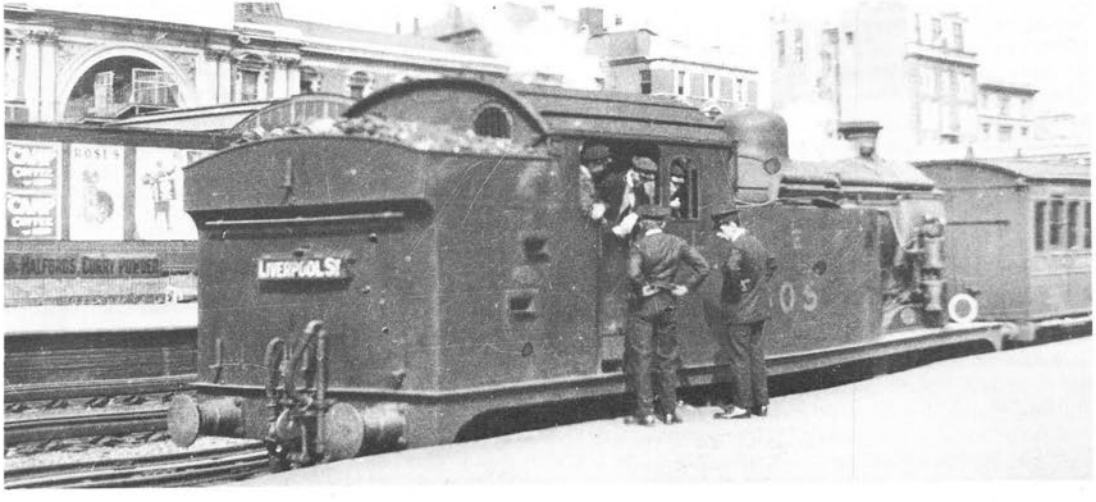
Troop trains included those for German prisoners. I remember well a train of them, kept on the inner down line away from the platform while the engines were being changed. They wore the grey Prussian uniform and the occasional spiked helmet.

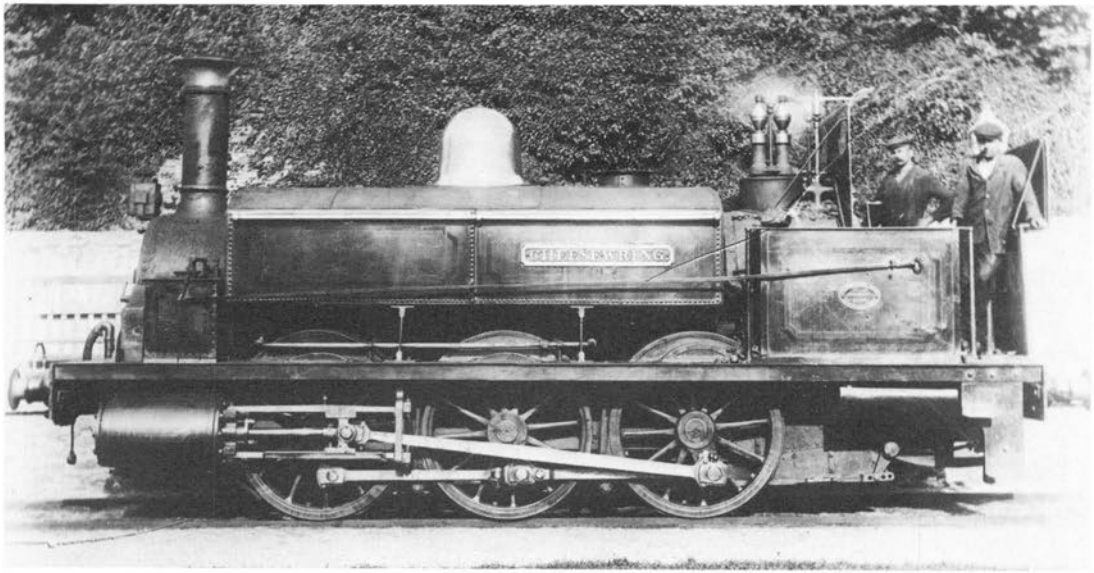
6
Working under the Railway Grouping: 1923-39

The grouping of railways, which came into force at the beginning of 1923, gathered all the railways, save for the London lines and a few minor rural ones, into four main groups. However much change this brought about elsewhere, it affected the West London very little — it merely had three owners instead of four. Addison Road was still the office of the Superintendent of the Line, who had always been a GWR (or now, a London, Midland & Scottish) Railway man. Local services remained unchanged. The Earl's Court-Willesden service suffered some shortage of rolling stock, so an extra train was assembled for this from spare motorcoaches with ordinary main line stock between them.[1] Willesden High Level station, which had been enlarged in 1894, now received an additional platform for the Earl's Court trains.[2] Relics of the former LNWR-Brighton line services to Victoria and Croydon remained in the form of once-daily steam motor-trains, usually composed of two bogie coaches and a 2-4-2 or 0-6-2 tank engine pushing them. Their purpose was for parcels traffic and they were not supposed to take passengers beyond Battersea (I did however in 1927 manage to use one through to Crystal Palace). They would collect vans on the way and arrive with the engine in the middle.[3]

The third regular passenger service that to Clapham Junction, was now under one company, the Southern Railway, but oddly it retained the separate characteristics of the former partners for many years. Thus half the trains still used the 'Brighton side' of Clapham Junction (platforms 16 or 17) and half the 'South Western' (platforms 1 or 2) — to the frequent annoyance of passengers, who had to dash over the very long footbridge spanning 16 platforms and the carriage sidings, to find where the next train was standing. The engines used for the 'Brighton side' were usually the 0-4-2 tank engines Nos 222 and 276, later replaced by Nos 281 and 629, and still later by the larger 0-4-4 type No 673 in 1930, No 398 in 1933, and No 264 in 1934. The LSWR trains used the small 0-4-4 tank engines Nos 207 and 208, later replaced by No 198 and 235 of the same class, and after 1930 by Nos 249 and 357 of the larger class.

Below:
LNER 0-6-2T No 2605 of 1923 on a troop train from Colchester in 1930.



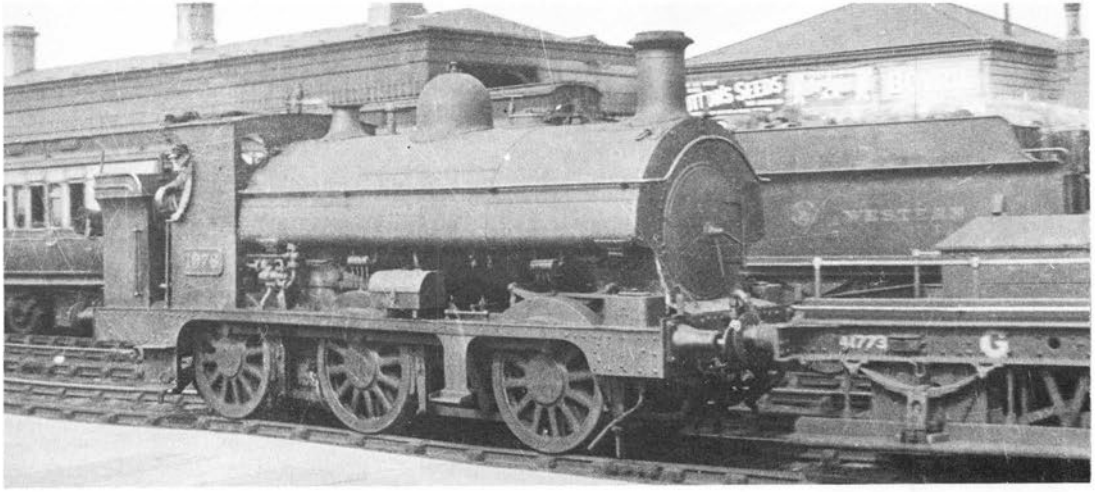


On 1 February 1923 a derailment occurred at North Pole Junction. At this point, the crest of a hill, it was always difficult to keep the loose train couplings of a 40-wagon train tight on the descending side; the leading wagons would tend to bunch up against the engine while those still on the uphill part would still be tightly linked. Any snatch would put a heavy strain on the couplings of those wagons that happened to be on the hump at that moment. This danger had long been known, and a short siding with catch-points, sand-drag and buffers had been built beside the line. On this day a coupling broke half way along just such a train, and 15 wagons and the guard's van ran back down the slope. The guard, finding he could not hold the runaway wagons, wisely jumped out, and the whole lot piled into the buffers, smashed the van to matchwood, and toppled over the embankment down on to Scrubs Lane. Fourteen open wagons and one oil tank littered the scene, together with the contents of dozens of barrels of red pickles which had burst. Most of the debris was however clear of the running lines, but the breakdown crane could only work by blocking both, and recovery was spead over 10 days to minimise the interruption to traffic. Oddly, an identical mishap occurred at the same point just 30 years later.

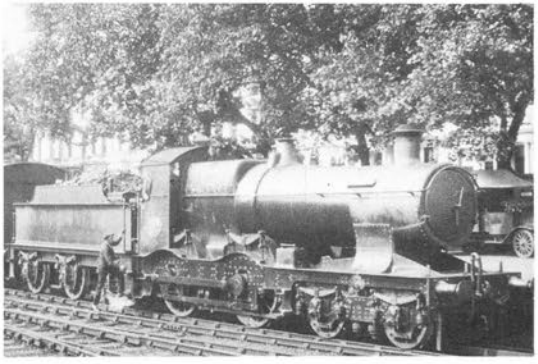
In 1924 the GWR began a once-a-day weekday

Above:
GWR milk traffic was important to the line — this is the company's 0-6-0ST No 1311 of 1864 (ex-Liskeard & Looe) *Cheesewring* at Old Oak Common 1918-19.
Locomotive Publishing Co

Below:
No 1976 of 1890 was a GWR 0-6-0ST, a type used on the local milk traffic.



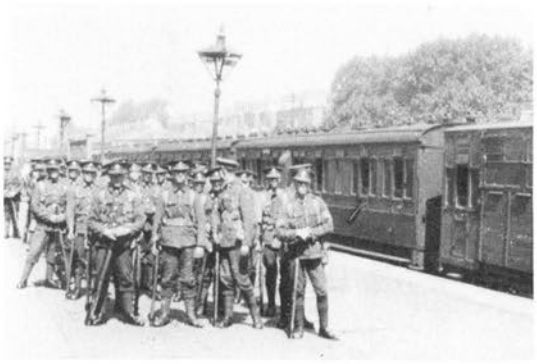
Above:
An 1894 2-4-0T of the GWR, No 3567, on a milk train in Kensington northeast bay. *IAL*



Right:
GWR 4-4-0 No 3321 *Brasenose* of 1899, Kensington northeast bay, 1929.

Below:
A troop train bound for Aldershot in 1930, hauled by LSWR 4-4-0 No 191 of 1903.

service (which however was not advertised), from Greenford to Addison Road, sometimes by Old Oak Common, sometimes by the Ealing & Shepherds



Above:
An RAF special train from Uxbridge in 1929, with GWR 2-4-0T No 982 of 1874.

Left:
Cavalry regiment troops detraining in 1929 at Kensington.

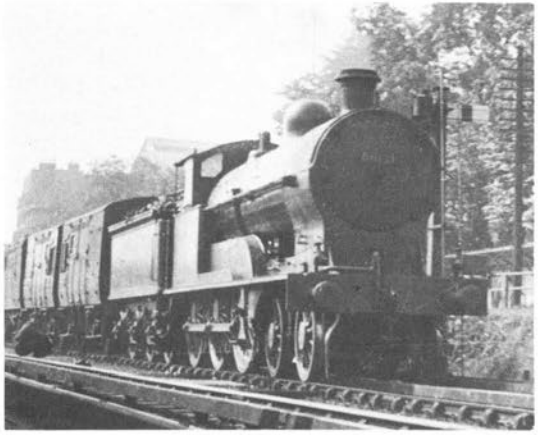
Bush Railway. It was run for Messrs J. Lyons' staff.[4] An unusual GWR train, on 2 July 1924, was an 'autocar' running empty from Acton to Clapham Junction to pick up a party from Brighton and run back to Castlebar Park for an athletic meeting.

Olympia continued to provide traffic for the line. There was a poultry show in 1923 for which the railway's handbills offered 'splendid accommodation for dealing with exhibits, which should be consigned by passenger train' — which must have been an unwelcome extra task for the guards. For large crowds visiting the 'Ideal Home' exhibition an intensive service of electric trains to Earl's Court was run.[5]

In 1925 there were no changes of note, though the 'Sunny South Special' was growing so popular that it sometimes had to be run in two parts, and often had to take on a second engine for the northward climb.[6] This year also the service to Edgware Road was temporarily cut back to Ladbroke Grove while the Edgware Road station was being rebuilt.[7] In January 1925 special trains began delivering new District Railway Class G coaches from tne manufacturers to the Lillie Bridge depot. As well as such new stock, there was a good deal of heavy goods such as rails, ballast and sleepers to be delivered there, and both the London, Midland & Scottish (LMS) and the GWR made provision for this by a morning 'When Required' run.[8] Sometimes condemned rolling stock was worked out in this way; some of the original District 'A' class cars with open gated ends were seen in Addison Road and may have been on their way to Park Royal, where they were being scrapped.

There were some minor changes in 1926. There was once more a shortage of electric trains for the Earl's Court-Willesden service, and this time the LMS resorted to the re-employment, so to speak, of a steam train. This, still in LNWR black and white livery, had two compartment coaches and a 2-4-2 tank engine, which used to cause something of a sensation when it pushed its way into all-electric Earl's Court, blowing off steam deafeningly after the descent from Earl's Court Junction. It ran from 4 January 1926 to 15 January 1927.[9] An important

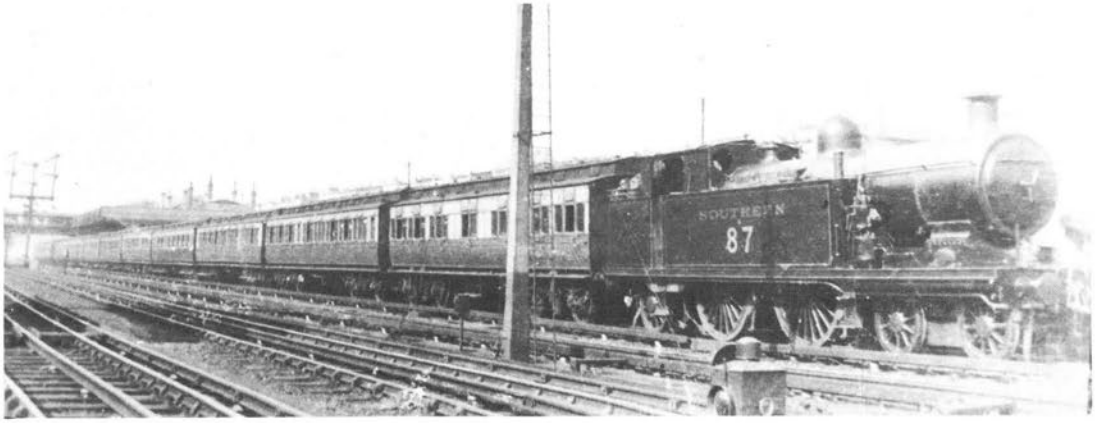
event from this time on was the Football Association's Cup Final match at Wembley every year, and as both teams usually came from the North there were heavy excursions of supporters into the London termini. On 24 April 1926, therefore, Addison Road was used as a relief station for special



Above:
This GWR 2-6-0, No 6344 of 1925, is with an LNER troop train from Edinburgh in 1929.

Right:
LNWR 4-6-0 No 5669 *Vulcan* (ex-525) of 1915 on a horsebox train to Weedon, 1930.

Below:
This very long coach train (14, in fact) of 1929 is being hauled by the LBSCR's 1912 4-4-2T, No 87.

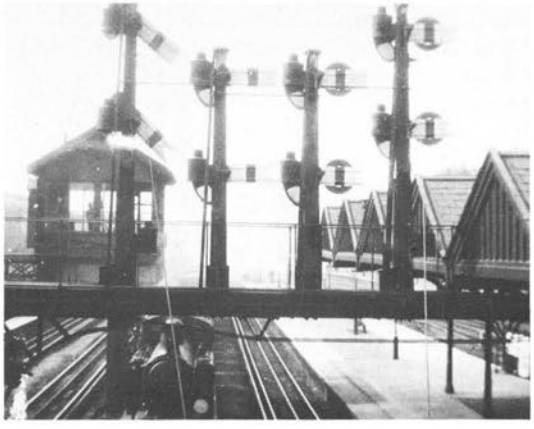


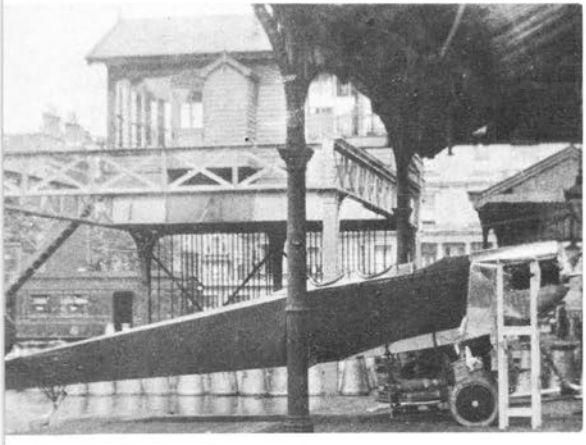
trains, as well as trains from the GWR line which had to be reversed and taken on to Wembley.

The General Strike, from 4 May to 14 May 1926, shut down all services on the line, despite a sober appeal from the GWR management to its men.[10] Volunteers kept some essential services — such as milk traffic — going, but Addison Road, which normally handled several thousand milk-churns every day, was probably considered too difficult to guard from interference, so for 10 days the traffic was concentrated on Paddington, which had then to handle up to 10,000 churns a day as against its usual load of half that number. When things got back to normal all services were resumed, and the summer brought many special workings. On one day — 8 August — there were six Territorial Army troop trains loading guns and horses, and in the same month another special working of horse-box trains brought an ex-GNR Atlantic engine (believed to have been No 4419) to Addison Road. Another unusual engine for the line was the Southern Railway's 2-6-4 express tank engine No 800, *River Cray* — a type destined to be withdrawn after the Sevenoaks accident of the next year. The Clapham Junction service was for a time run by a 'Brighton' 4-4-2 tank engine, No 12, with three bogie coaches, but soon reverted to the familiar 0-4-2 tank engines No 281 and 629.

In the autumn the Motor Show brought a great amount of traffic; in one day 47 covered vans brought in the exhibits, kept carefully sheeted over while unloading, no firm wanting to bare its secrets to its rivals. Also in 1926 the large rings on the signals in Addison Road station were removed; they had been installed under LNWR practice to mark 'slow' lines.

In 1927 there were no changes in regular services, but the number of special trains grew considerably. For the year's Cup Final match, much more use was made of the line, and in one morning 11 special trains were diverted to Addison Road, bringing an

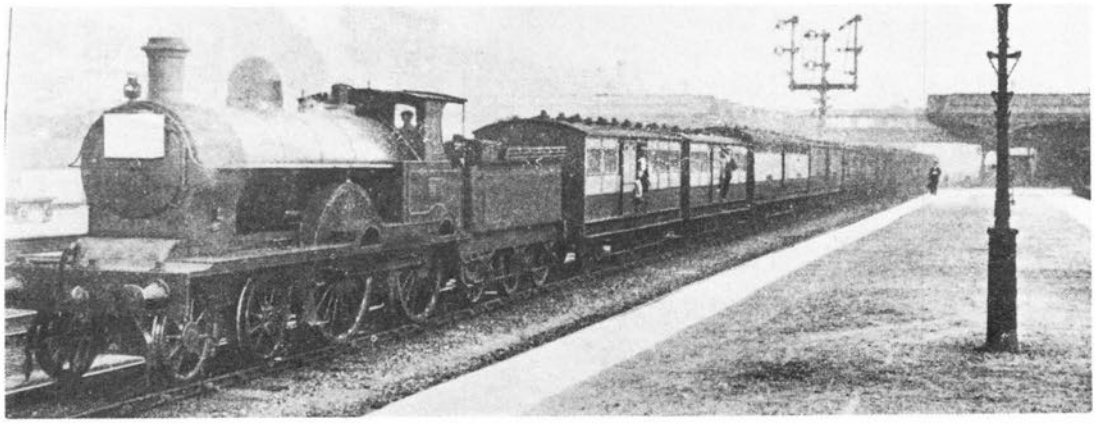




Above left:
Addison Road station c1919, with LBSCR 0-6-0T No 101 passing.

Left:
Unloading a RAF fighter plane at Kensington in 1920.

Below:
A Huddersfield-Southampton pigeon train in 1911, headed by *Canopus*, the LNWR 4-4-0 No 1913 of 1899.



Top:
Part of the west side of Kensington was adapted for parcel loading, such as into this WLJR motor van in 1928.

Above:
GWR 2-4-0T No 3564 of 1894 was used on the local milk run to Kensington. *IAL*

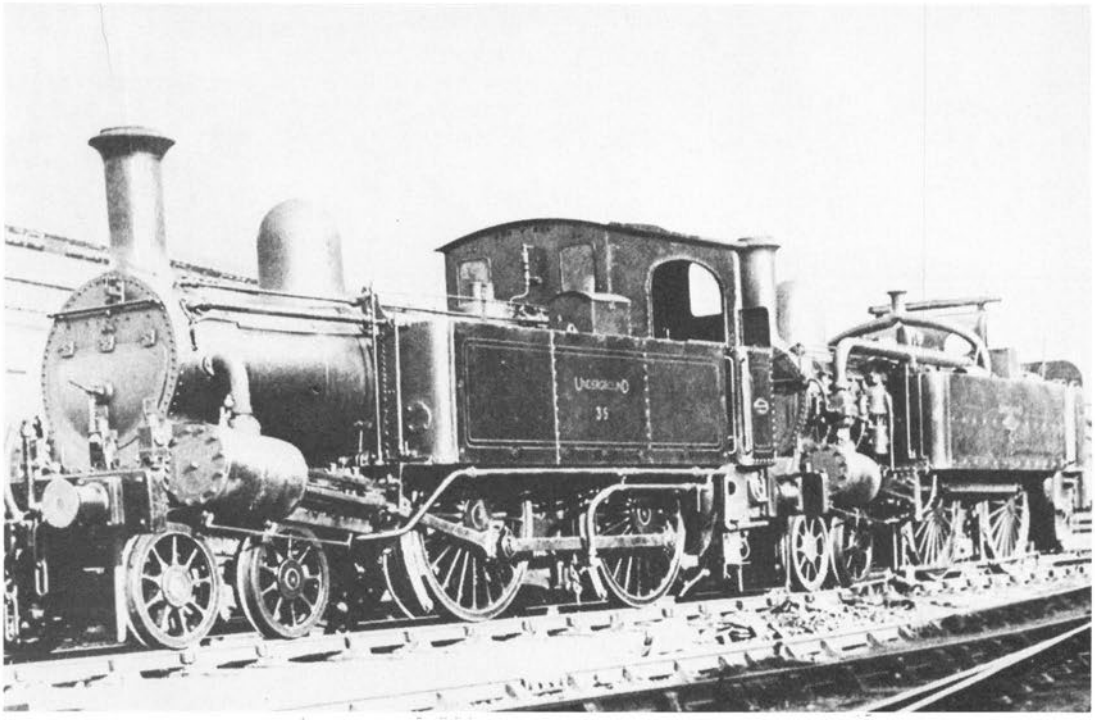
Below:
North London Railway 4-4-0T No 109 of 1861 on parcels service at Kensington in 1920. *Locomotive Publishing Co*

elegant selection of the express passenger engines of the period.[11] The year also saw the first appearance on the line of two new classes of engine; these were the LMS Mogul 2-6-0 mixed-traffic engine, No 13043, of Horwich design, and the same company's new standard 0-6-0 tank engine, No 16424.

With heavier trains, double-heading northwards became more and more common, and many strange combinations of engines were seen.[12] The huge early morning milk-empties train of the GWR continued to have three engines.

There were occasional interruptions in the electric current supply, which left the Willesden-Earl's Court trains stranded until locomotives could be found to help, and there was one occasion (11 July 1927) when heavy floods paralysed the whole of Addison Road station. Also to be noted in 1927 was the appearance of glass-lined bulk milk trucks of the GWR in October.[13]

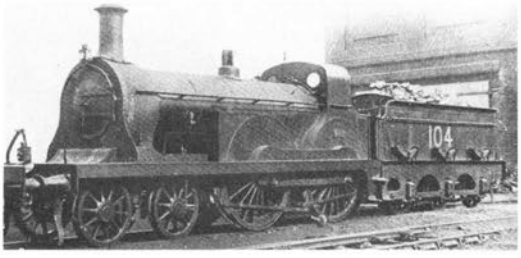
Some special trains in 1928 are of interest. The funeral train of Earl Haig, of two carriages and a van, was worked on 3 February from Waterloo to Willesden by ex-LSWR 0-4-4 tank engine No E106, over the little-used east spur at Latchmere Junction. Then on 12 May there was an instance of close working of special trains, when several thousand employees of the Gas, Light & Coke Co had a lavish presentation to their chairman for which Olympia was hired. Eight long trains, mostly of 11 carriages but one of 15, brought the employees from Bow, Southall and Dalston, and five engines of a type totally new to the line appeared, 4-4-2 tank engines from the London, Tilbury & Southend Railway.[14] Pigeons filled three long trains on 11 June of up to 13 bogie vans, brought in by LNWR 'Precursor' or 'Prince of Wales' class engines and taken on by 4-4-0 engines from the LSWR. Another very busy day was

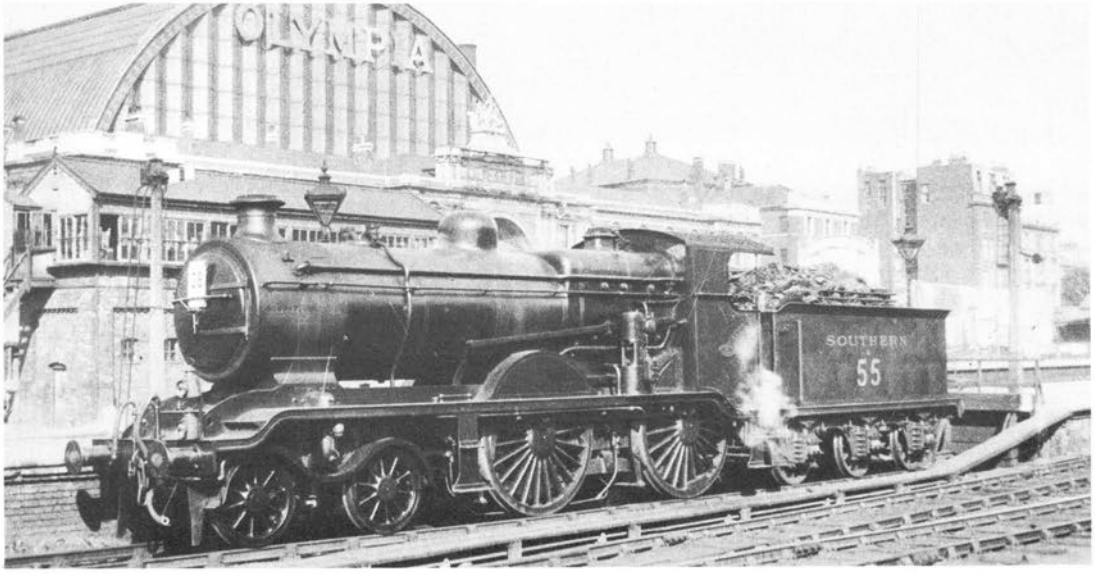


Above:
Metropolitan Railway 4-4-0T No 35 (ex-23) of 1866, and District Railway 4-4-0T No 34 of 1880 at Lillie Bridge depot, making an occasional visit to Kensington.

Right:
This 1895 SECR 4-4-0 No 104 still carried its wartime grey livery in 1919.

Below:
LBSCR 4-4-0 No 55 of 1901 in the engine lay-by at Kensington in 1929.





Top:
An 1882 4-4-0 of the Midland Railway, No 426, at Kensington with a horsebox train in 1930.

Above:
Seen at Kensington in 1928 were two LNWR 4-4-0s of 1911, No 5353 (ex-1792) *Staghound* and No 5349 (ex-502) *British Empire*.

23 June producing a typically varied array of locomotives from several companies.[15]. Some excursions were being run in triplicate[16].

Football specials were always a feature of the line in winter since the Chelsea Stadium was well served by its station, though the trains could not be reversed out from there but had to go on to Clapham Junction. In 1929 there was a good example of smart work, clearing eight incoming football specials from Chelsea in an hour on 26 January. Other special trains of note were four long trains of pilgrims from Heysham to Folkestone for Lourdes on 29 March, the annual excursion for the employees of the Leyland factories to Dover for France (from small beginnings in previous years now grown to five trains, chasing each other in at 10min intervals and all having to change engines) and eight Cup Final excursions. Horse traffic on 19 June produced trains from all the four railway groups, and a fifth one of Cheshire Lines Committee stock. On another busy day — 22 June — there were 34 special workings,

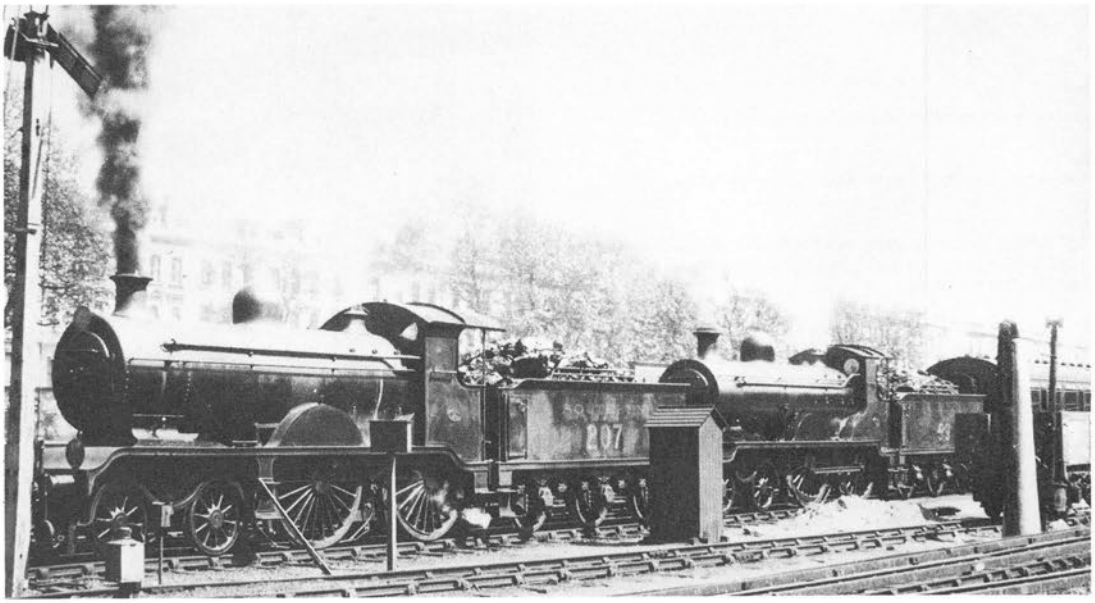
all but two of them excursions, and in the midst of them the GWR 'Bulldog' 4-4-0 engine No 3361 worked a train of new District Railway stock from the makers to Lillie Bridge depot.[17]

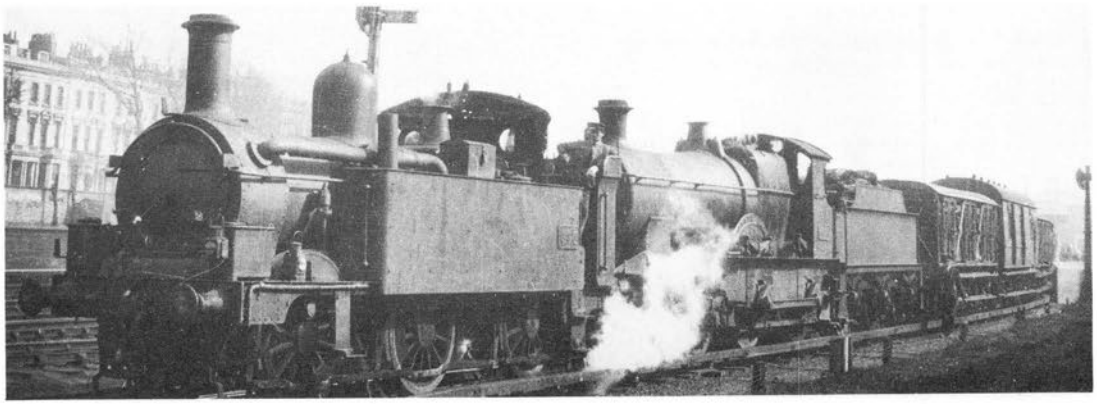
The foregoing will give an idea of the number and variety of special trains using the line, particularly in the summer, and this was repeated over the next 10 years, the main difference being the gradual fading out of the older engines and their replacement by

Right:
A steam crane from Plaistow was used to help construct the new Kensington station footbridge in 1930.

Below:
LBSCR 4-4-0 B207 of 1899 and 4-4-0 B59 of 1901 on a 'Sunny South Special' in 1929.

Bottom:
GWR 0-6-0T No 633 of 1871 piloting the same company's 4-4-0 on a milk empties train in 1928.





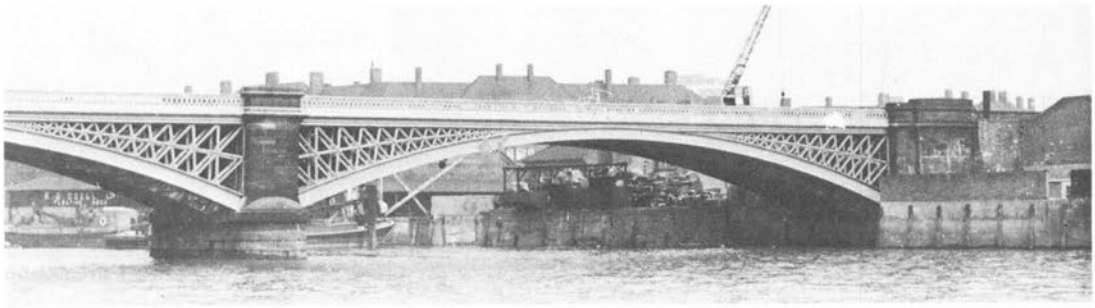
those built since the grouping. To carry on the account of these special trains (but mentioning only the more unusual ones) the year 1930 saw Cup Final excursions, military trains, summer excursions and theatrical specials as before, and one day saw the arrival of a most unusual engine, the ex-GER 4-6-0 engine No 8545, which brought in a troop train from Colchester.[18] That year there were some very heavy special traffic days, for example 28 June with 38 special trains, and 9 July with 52. An unusual goods traffic was that of delivering new double-deck tramcars to the London County Council. These were carried partly dismantled, lower deck and top deck on adjacent trucks. Another novel goods working was that of a train of vans sent up empty from Clapham Junction on 19 January 1930 to Addison Road to collect elephants. It was hauled by the only GNR engine to be seen on the line for many years, an 0-6-2 tank engine No 4575. The vans were shunted into the northwest bay, the end doors opened over the buffers, and all that had to be done was to coax the first elephant over the buffers with a bun, the rest, linked trunk to tail, automatically following.

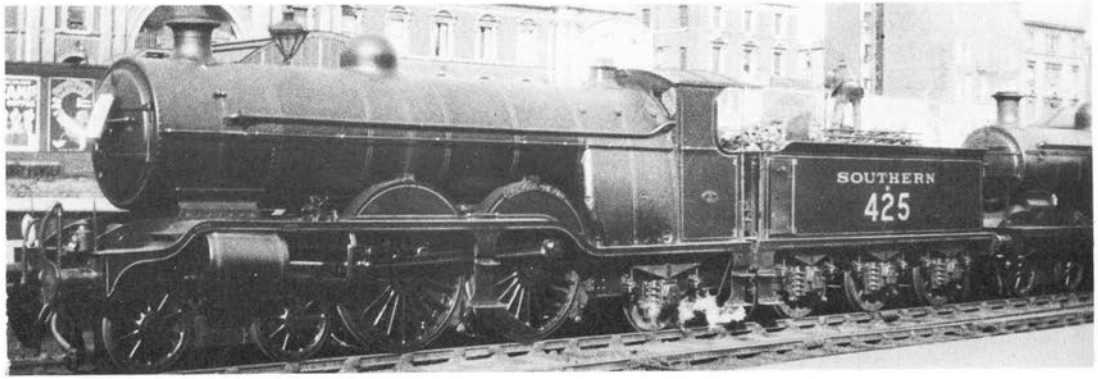
A new feature was a growing number of theatrical specials, always on Sundays as the harassed small touring companies changed locations. The LMS provided numbered trains, but the origins and destinations of these were so mixed that there must have been a lot of waiting and remarshalling done, both at Old Oak Common or Willesden and at Clapham Junction. A single train would combine Southend-Leatherhead, Manchester-Kingston and New Brighton-Hastings moves. A dozen such trains were noted between March and June 1930, and often with the very oldest of engines — one was hauled by an ancient GWR 'Buffalo' saddletank engine, No 953, built about 1870.

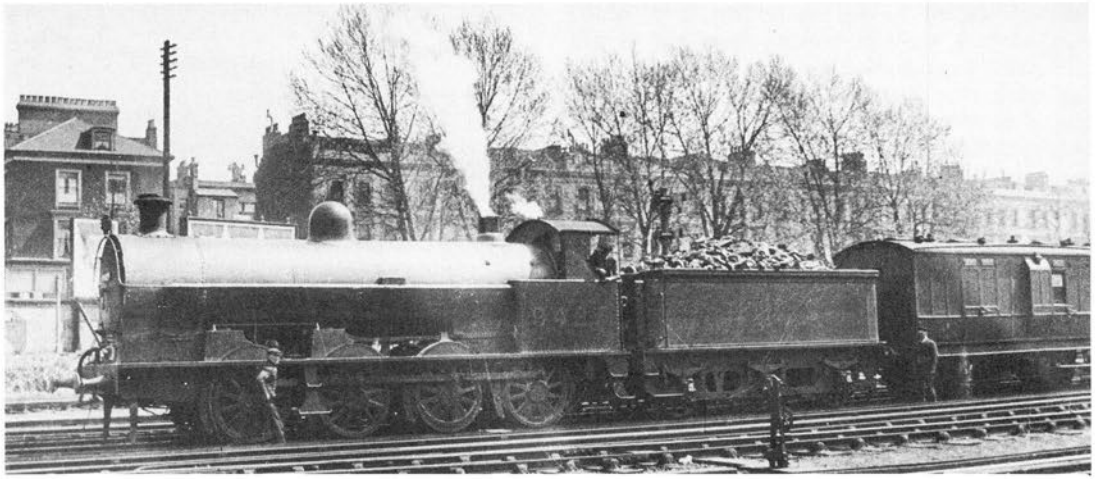
Right:
The new Kensington footbridge completed.

Below:
Replacing the decking of Cremorne Bridge in 1969.

Bottom:
One of the larger engines on the line in the 1920s was this LBSCR 4-4-2 of 1911 B425 *Trevose Head*, at Kensington in 1929.



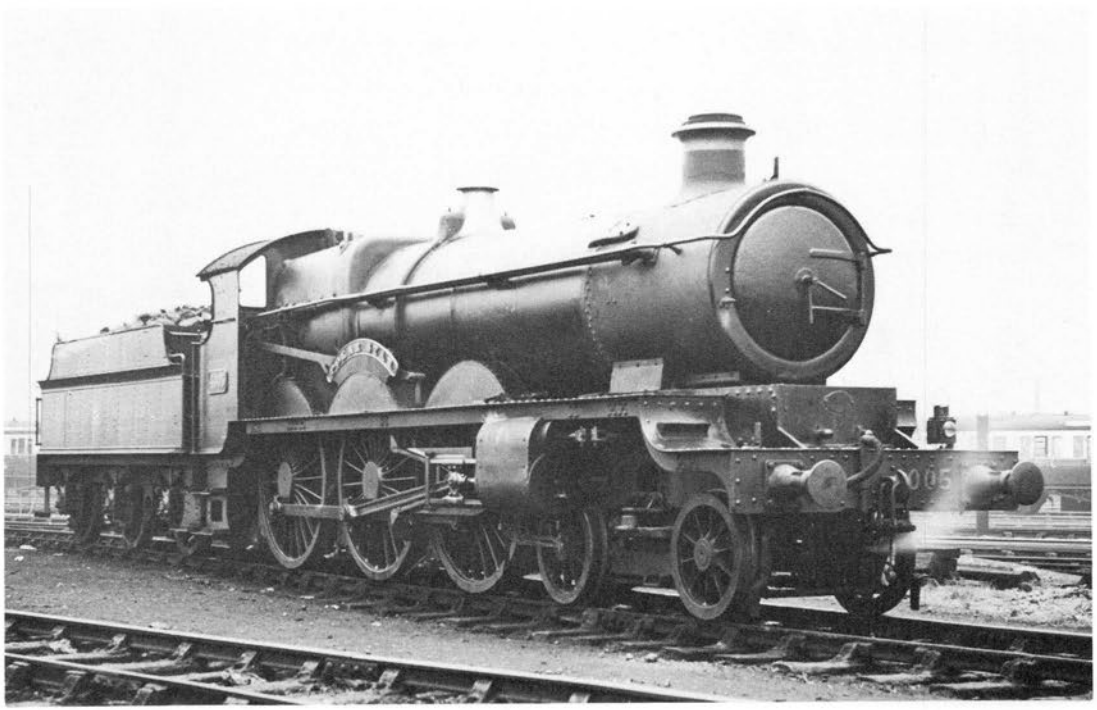




A notable 'special' in 1932 was that carrying the Papal Legate, Cardinal Lauri, on his way to Dublin. The train was from Folkestone to Chester, and included a borrowed royal saloon. It was a Sunday — 19 June — and Addison Road station was empty, and all the afternoon crowds collected, soon lining the long down platform all the way from the footbridge to the water-crane at the north end, and some six deep. A space under the goods awning had been roped off and provided with carpets and chairs for the local dignitaries, (these including Sir Josiah Stamp, Chairman of the LMS.) Behind them stood rows of nuns from a local convent, and a children's choir dressed in pink. The crowd grew thicker, and many climbed on to the roofs of milk vans in the bay, and when the train came in there was a roar of cheering and singing. An ex-SECR 'L' class 4-4-0 engine, A777, brought the train in and the Cardinal stepped

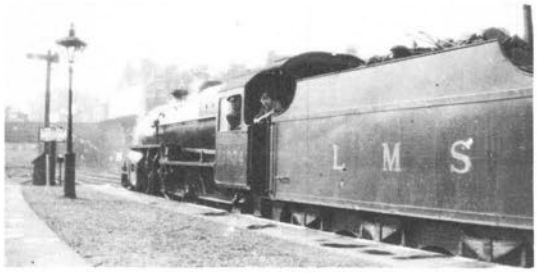
Above:
LNWR 0-8-0 of 1921, No 9427 (ex-2047) taking over a northbound special in 1929.

Below:
GWR 4-6-0 No 4005 *Polar Star* of 1907, used on exchange passenger traffic in 1930. *Real Photos*



out and walked to the seat in the shed, nearly engulfed in a wave of kneeling men and women asking his blessing, those nearest seeking to kiss his ring and others prostrate on the ground to kiss the hem of his robe. The Southern engine left, and a very smart red 'Claughton' class 4-6-0 engine, decorated in advance, backed down and coupled up. This was No 5925 *E. C. Trench* with front buffers and coupling chain painted white and a large square board fixed to the smokebox door yellow and white in the Vatican colours with a design of the Papal Keys. The Cardinal returned to his carriage to the singing of the hymn 'Faith of Our Fathers', and now everyone tried to press up to the window of the carriage where the Cardinal leaned out to bless the crowds. The crowd sang 'God bless Our Pope', the train moved off at walking pace only, police walking with it to keep people clear — not an easy task where many were kneeling at the platform's edge and only after it had passed the end of the long platform did the engine whistle and pick up speed. It was a strange scene for a railway station.

About this time a 24hr census of train movements in Addison Road station was made, and showed 629 train movements carried out by 65 different engines, as well as the electric train movements. It is interesting as recording the everyday traffic of a weekday, as distinct from the weekend special trains, and shows 31 engines from the GWR, 19 from the LMS, and 15 from the southern railways.[19]



Top:
LMSR 2-6-0 No 13034 of 1926 on a 1929 excursion train.

Above:
LNWR 4-6-0 No 5981 (ex-98) of 1920 on a special train at Kensington in 1929.

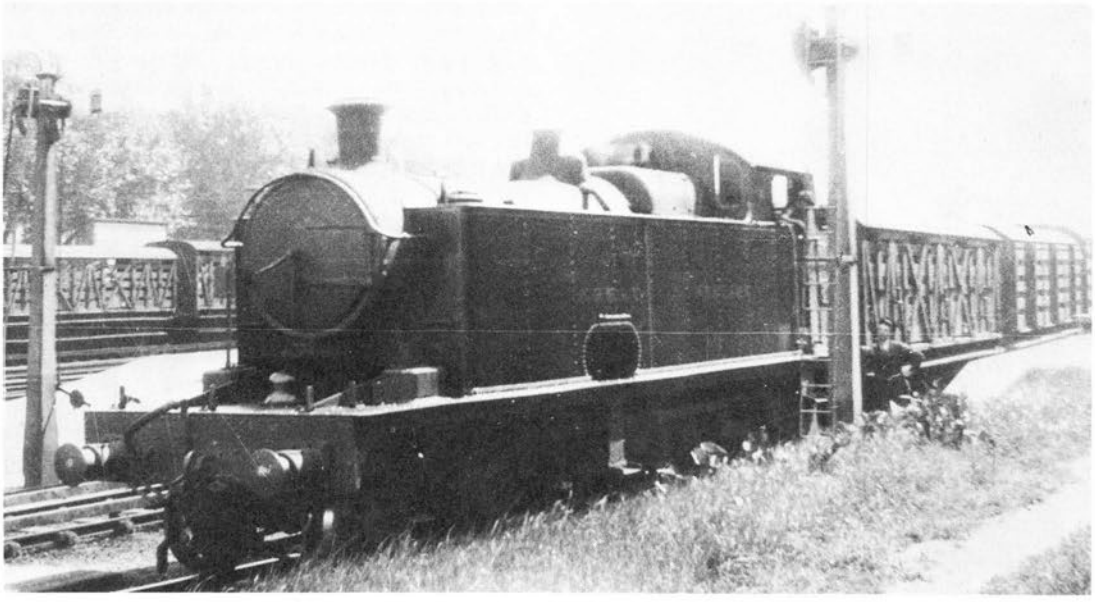
Below:
Formerly the 2-4-6T *River Char*, Southern Railway 2-6-0 A808 of 1926 at Kensington in 1928.

An innovation of 1932 was the running of LMS excursions to Aldershot for the Army Tattoo, six such trains passing through Addison Road on 11 June. So many excursions were from north to south as people of the wet northwest sought the sun, that such trains from south to north were something of a novelty. Weekly in the summer, excursion trains were run from Tunbridge Wells, Hastings and other places to the works of Messrs Cadbury at Bourneville, changing engines at Addison Road. These trains were unusual in that they included a Pullman car.

Mention should now be made of some work done on the line itself. The old Addison Road footbridge in 1869 needed renewal, and as it was badly situated for Olympia a new one was built farther south that extended not only over the tracks but into the exhibition buildings. The steel supports were put in on the up and down platforms and on 5 January 1930 — a Sunday — the engineers were given 'total possession' of all four through lines for the morning. The

Left:
This derailment of a goods train on North Pole bank in 1923 was an accident that was to be repeated 30 years later.

Below:
Flooding has been a problem on the line throughout its history, as shown by Kensington station, here out of action in 1927.



Above:
1907 2-6-2T No 3902 of the GWR on a milk train at Kensington in 1930.

Below:
LBSCR 4-4-2T B35 of 1908 derailed at Kensington in 1929.

Bottom:
Old and new types of milk churns being loaded, 1930.

steam crane from Plaistow was placed on the down main line, the girders on their long wagons on the up main line, and the spans were in place by midday, with an interval between the first and second lifts for a train to pass. Covered access to Olympia was now achieved, but the old footbridge remained in use for several years more, being removed sometime during World War 2. Over the next few years some minor alterations were made to the station: a loading ramp was built at the end of the northwest bay and part of the down side station building was cut off to make a loading bay for lorries.

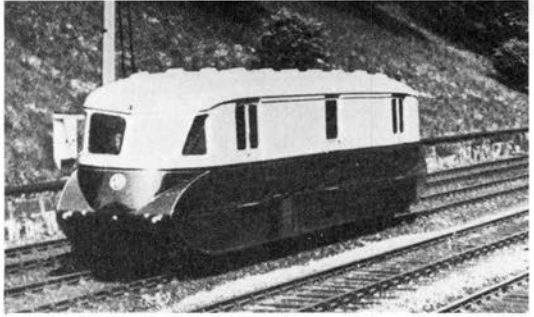
The Shepherds Bush and Hammersmith line had been totally abandoned from Ricmond Junction by 1927, and the signal arms removed from the down gantry by Kensington North signalbox, but the rails and signals of the branch remained in place several more years. Another 'South Western' branch — that from Latchmere Junction to the main line for Waterloo — was lifted in 1936. The Battersea station signalbox was closed in March of the same year.

Reverting to special trains (always a matter of interest for their variety) the year 1935 brought one headed by a 'Royal Scot' engine, the first time one of these big 4-6-0 express engines had been seen on the line. The reason however was sentimental rather than operational, for the engine — No 6148 — bore the name *Manchester Regiment*. The men of this regiment, after serving some years in Bermuda were now being transferred to Egypt by way of Southampton but, in good Army fashion, were not stopping long enough to be given home leave and see their families. Instead, the Army organised two special trains from Manchester overnight on 13-14 October, by Addison Road and East Putney to Southampton, and the first

of these was drawn by the appropriate engine. For a mere few hours were the families reunited on board the troopship and then hurried ashore for the return trip the same night.

At this period cheap excursions from the Home Counties to the South Coast became very popular. The LMS ran many such trains, stopping at Willesden to pick up London passengers, and if the arriving train from, say, Tring was full when it got there a second train would be put on from Willesden to follow it. At a price of 4s. 6d ($22\frac{1}{2}$p) from Willesden to Brighton and back, these trains were highly popular with Londoners.

Little has been said in this chapter about the regular passenger services, but these remained largely unaltered. The 'Sunny South Special' continued summer after summer to be well patronised, usually duplicated, occasionally run five-fold, and once — in 1938 — in seven parts. The 'Kent Coast Express' was equally popular, but a Coventry and Northampton to Bournemouth summer Saturday train tried out in 1929 was not so popular, and was withdrawn in 1933. Of local services, that from Willesden to Earl's Court ran with no change but the colour of the rolling stock, while the Edgware Road-Addison Road service continued; after 1936 it was operated by District Railway 'C' class stock as the Hammersmith & City trains were withdrawn for scrap.[20] The GWR workmen's train from Greenford to Clapham Junction, put on in 1924, was withdrawn in 1938, but the Addison Road-Clapham Junction

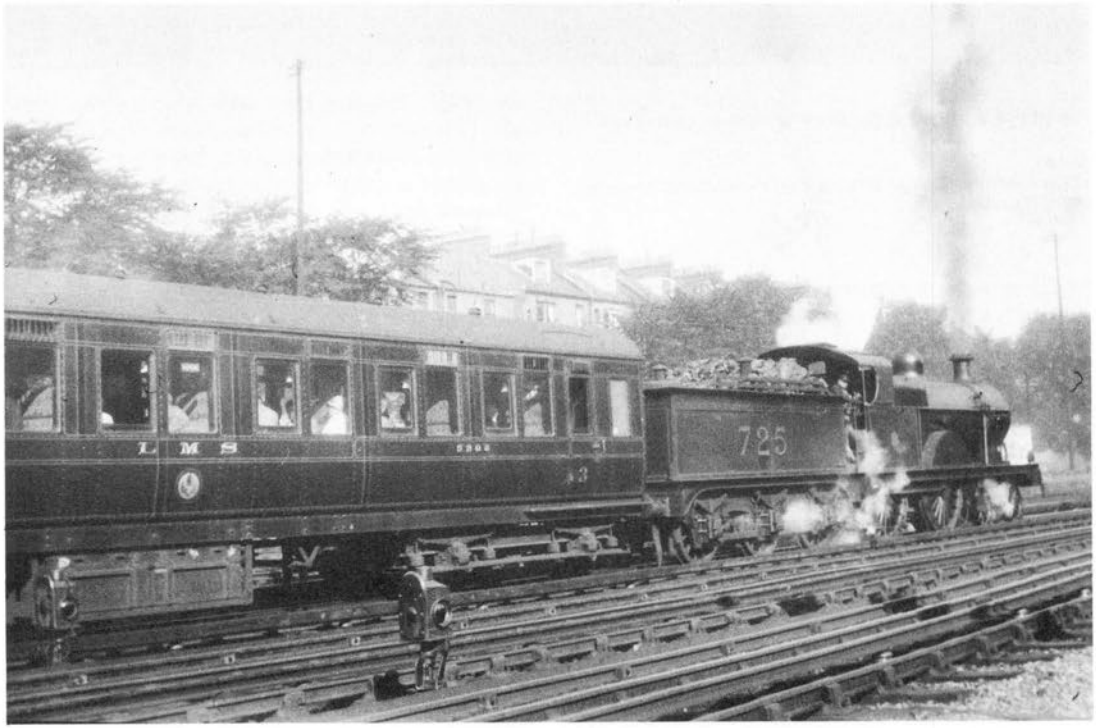


service continued as before, larger engines beginning to be used for it. On the 'Brighton' half of it the 0-4-2 tank engines survived to about 1934, when engine B629 was replaced by the 0-4-4 tank engine B364; occasional use had been made earlier of the large 4-4-2 tank engines on this route, but B35 of this class became derailed while running round its train on 1 March 1929 in the southeast bay of Addison Road — the crossover built 66 years earlier had been for rather smaller engines. The 'South Western' half of the service continued to use 0-4-4 tank engines, small or large, throughout, only occasionally relieved by rather similar engines from the London, Chatham & Dover Railway.[21]

Parcels services, both local and transit, were

Above:
In 1936 GWR diesel parcels car No 17 was working the Kensington-Reading express parcels service. *BR*

Below:
Northbound on an excursion at Kensington in 1928, MR 4-4-0 No 725.



Top:
The 1925 LMSR 0-6-0 No 4139 in 1929 at Kensington.

Above:
SECR 4-4-0 No 494 of 1903 taking over a LNER train in 1930, Kensington.

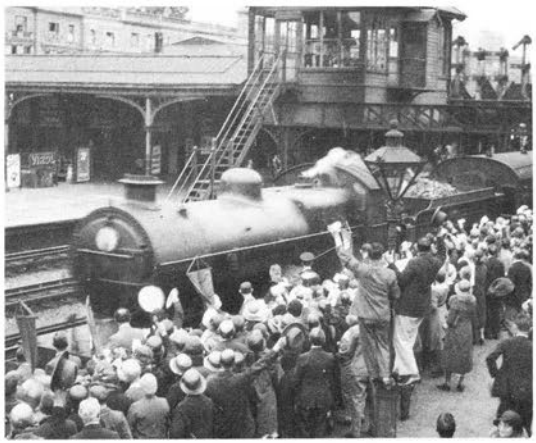
always an important part of the West London Joint Railway's traffic, and a new service was added for international mail for the Continent, vans from Birmingham being handed over at Willesden to an ex-SECR 0-4-4 tank engine and worked to Victoria for attachment to the evening Dover boat train, the empty stock being worked back the next day. For local parcels traffic the GWR put on an unusual service — a daily run by a streamlined rail-car driven by two 150hp diesel motors and carrying about 10 ton load. Put on in 1936 mainly for J. Lyons' cakes and confectionery, it ran to Reading and Oxford daily. There was also a road distribution and collection parcels service based on Addison Road station, part of the west-side buildings of which was adapted as a loading bay. A few GWR lorries had maintained this service from 1918, at that time with Milnes-Daimler, then with AEC and by 1930 with Thornycroft vans on pneumatic tyres. These carried the West London Joint Railways' name on their canopies and served the locality by road.

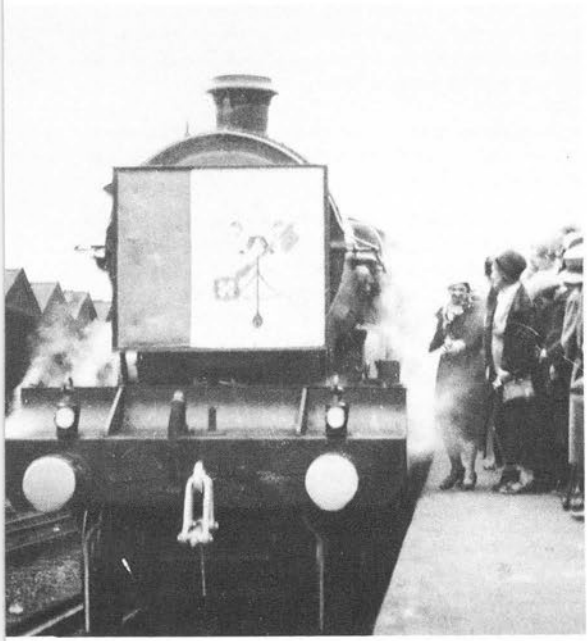
It remains to note the types of engine seen on the West London line in this post-grouping period. Many have already been mentioned in connection with the services on which they appeared, but a note kept of those seen over the six years 1927-1932 is of interest. While it cannot be complete, it does help to give a picture of what was to be seen half a century ago.

The LMS offered the largest number — 224 engines of 20 types, the largest number being ex-LNWR 4-6-0 classes (83); of these there were 21 'Experiment', 48 'Prince of Wales', 13 'Claughton' and one '19in goods' types. Engines of the 4-4-0 type (54) were made up of 22 'Precursor', nine 'George the Fifth' and one 'Renown' type, and a rather surprising total of 22 from the Midland Railway, though some of these were of post grouping construction. From the LNWR came also 21 of the massive 0-8-0 goods engines — so useful here for helping trains over the 'hump' — and many 0-6-0 engines of the 'Cauliflower' or '17in Coal' types — these last prob-

ably being among the oldest engines on the line, some dating from 1873. Tank engines were of 4-4-2, 2-4-2 and 0-6-2 types, some of them dating back to 1882. New (that is, post-grouping) engines were 10 Horwich-designed 2-6-0 mixed-traffic engines. 22 Midland-type 0-6-0 goods engines, and five general-purpose 0-6-0 tank engines.

The GWR contributed 119 engines of 22 types, the majority six-coupled. These included 39 2-6-0 'Moguls' and 36 4-6-0 types (14 'Saint', 13 'Star', six 'Castle' and three 'Hall'). Numerous 0-6-0 goods engines of several types were seen, a few 2-6-2 tank types (one rebuilt from 0-6-0 tender) and a choice assortment of 0-6-0 tank engines which ranged from two built in 1869 to a pair new in 1929 — unusual examples of a basic design lasting some 60 years. Of the 4-4-0 engines, there were 10 'Bulldog', two 'Atbara' and three 'Duke' types and one — No 3550 — which had started life in 1888 as a broad-gauge tank engine and been converted. Four-coupled tank engines were four 'County Tank' 4-4-2, two 2-4-2 and seven 2-4-0 types, these last often with no cabs and some dating back to 1869.[22] Engines from the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway were eight Atlantic, 20 4-4-0, five 2-6-0 and four 0-4-2 tender engines, and of tank engines three of the big 4-6-4 'Baltic' type (this was before they had been rebuilt as tender engines), two 4-6-2s, 26 4-4-2s, 14 0-6-2s, two 0-6-0s three 0-4-4s and four 0-4-2s. From the LSWR came principally variations of the 4-4-0 type beloved of that line, 48 of them ranging from Drummond's graceful 'K10' and 'L11' classes with their small boilers and tall funnels, to the rather awkward-looking larger-boilered 'D15' class of





Top:
The Band of the RAF marching out of Kensington station in 1928.

Above:
The SECR 4-4-0, A777, bringing in the train carrying the Papal Legate from Folkestone in 1932.

Left:
LNWR 4-6-0 No 5925 (ex-2174) *E. C. Trench* of 1916 decorated with papal insignia for the Papal Legate's train to Chester in 1932.

1912. A solitary 4-6-0 engine of Drummond design, and one 0-4-2 engine of Adams's design were seen, while tank engines were 22 of the 0-4-4 type, large or small. From the SECR line came 25 assorted 4-4-0 engines, mostly of the large-boilered 'D1' and 'E1' types but with the occasional more handsome 'D' type of 1901, and once a Stirling 'F' class with its domeless boiler and 7ft coupled wheels. Of the ill-fated 'River' design of 2-6-4 tank engines, six were noted before the class was converted to tender engines, and there were three wartime-built 2-6-0 'Mogul' and two 0-6-0 goods engines. There were four old 0-4-4 tank engines from the South Eastern

and four from the London, Chatham & Dover Railway. In the period of these observations there were relatively few post-grouping engines seen, but five or six years later the picture was very different and far fewer pre-grouping engines were seen, except perhaps on the southern lines.[23] To take at random four engines seen on a day in 1938 working on the line, they were a LMSR Stanier 4-6-0 mixed-traffic engine, No 5327, and 0-8-0 goods engine No 9591, both on goods services to Norwood and fairly new, and GWR pannier-tank engines Nos 8764 and 8771. Finally, of completely 'foreign' engines should be noted the GER 4-6-0 express engine No 8545, the LNER 0-6-2 suburban tank engine No 2605, and two ex-GNR 0-6-2 tank engines, Nos 1570N and 4575.

The foregoing makes no claim to be a full record, being based on notes taken over a five-year period of living above the station, but it does help to show the types of engine seen on the line at this period. The West London Railway managed to remain pleasantly cosmopolitan to the end.

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1 For this train the motor units 39E and 53E were put on the ends of main line corridor coaches Nos 134 and 204 to run the Earl's Court service in April 1923. Later it was reassembled as a five-car train and the motor units replaced. It was now 27E-204-134-237-67E and ran in this form until the spring of 1924.

2 This was obtained by severing the relief through goods line from the Hampstead Junction Railway, building a wooden platform over part of the public footway adjacent, and erecting a wooden footbridge from the centre platform for access. The Earl's Court trains thus had a bay of their own, independent of other services.

3 Engines used for many years on these services were the 2-4-2 tank engine No 6711 and the 0-6-2 tank engine No 7710, both in the new red colours of the LMSR.

4 The service was handled by GWR 2-4-0 or 0-4-2 tank engines, the empty stock being stabled on a spare through line by Warwick Road goods yard during the day. Later this train ran through to Clapham Junction on weekdays but terminated at Addison Road on Saturdays. The only other regular use made of the Viaduct Junction line was for a night milk-train from Southall to Clapham Junction, a daytime one from West Ealing, and a goods train from Park Royal — this last usually worked by a GWR 'Bulldog' 4-4-0 engine.

5 Trains which had discharged their passengers worked through to the north end of the station and reversed into what the Traffic Notice called the 'Harrow Road' of the northeast bay, then out of it again as soon as the regular southbound train had passed, to follow it to the platform. Incidentally, the use of the term 'Harrow Road' is interesting; trains from Harrow had ceased to work from there in 1866, yet the railwaymen's term had survived in verbal use for some 60 years.

6 Usually a 'Brighton' 4-4-2 tank engine piloting the train engine, though on occasions a LMS 4-4-0 engine was called in to help. When an entire relief train was needed this was usually made up of Southern Railway stock with a dining car from the LMS.

7 The shortened service used a long siding at Ladbroke Grove that had been put in for a GWR service to Hammersmith (Grove Road) and Richmond long before the war. The siding, though never used, is still in place.

8 The LMS train would first serve that company's Brompton & Fulham goods depot and then wait in Lillie Bridge sidings for an hour, in which time the engine could go into the District Railway's yard if there was anything to collect or deliver. The GWR goods train would come an hour later and wait in the same way. Occasionally the depot's own engines would pull out wagons and bring them into the south end of Addison Road station to back them into Lillie Bridge sidings, and this gave a glimpse of some interesting engines; these were District Railway 4-4-0 condensing tank engines Nos 33 and 34, dating from 1881. The first was scrapped in 1925 and replaced by an even older similar engine from the Metropolitan Railway — No 22 of 1866 — and this, renumbered L35, lasted till 1931 when both were replaced by new engines.

9 The same shortage of electric rolling stock prevented the augmenting of the service for Olympia, so during March 1926 this was provided by three-car trains from the District Railway, using its dark crimson 'F' class stock.

10 The poster read:

'The National Union of Railwaymen have intimated that railwaymen have been asked to strike without notice tomorrow night. Each Great Western man has to decide his own course of action, but I appeal to all of you to hesitate before you break your contracts of service with the old Company, before you inflict grave injury upon the Railway Industry, and before you arouse ill-feeling in the Railway service which will take years to remove.'

It was of no avail and the strike took its unhappy course, and very truly lost forever to the railways an appreciable part of their goods traffic.

11 These, a very typical selection of their time, were the ex-LNWR 4-6-0 engines No 5536 *Derbyshire* and No 5655 *Smeaton*, a GWR 'Star' class 4-6-0, No 4059 *Princess Patricia*, two 'Saint' class engines, Nos 2936 *Cefntilla Court* and 2903 *Lady of Lyons*, and a Midland-type 4-4-0 compound engine, No 1129.

12 Some examples of double-heading in 1927 are a long train of 26 carriages of troops for Colchester hauled by LMS 0-6-0 engine No 4134 and ex-LNWR 0-8-0 engine No 9159; the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway 4-4-2 engine No 39, piloted on successive days by 4-4-2 tank and 0-6-0 tender engines from the same line; a pair of ex-LSWR 4-4-0 engines, Nos 400 and 421, on a GWR train, and a goods train double-headed by GWR 4-4-0 engine No 3374 *Walter Long* and a 2-4-2 tank engine. Pilot engines were sometimes stationed at the north end of Addison Road station, where there was a 'lay-by' and

sometimes in a siding beside the main line near Viaduct Junction, where a water tank was provided.

13 Two kinds of bulk milk tank wagon were used, one with the tank fixed to the wagon frame, the other with the tank on road wheels with pneumatic tyres anchored to the truck bed. The first type required a discharging plant and could only be used to milk depots, but the second type could be unloaded in Addison Road station's northwest bay over the buffer-stop. A daily train of empty tank-wagons was frequently headed by the GWR 4-6-0 engine No 2973 *Robins Bolitho*.

14 The former London, Tilbury & Southend Railway engines were Nos 2122, 2127, 2147, 2153 and 2179.

15 Two were LMS 0-6-0 goods engines built in the previous year (Nos 4439 and 4446), five ex-LNWR 4-6-0 types (Nos 5520 *Sisyphus*, 5660 *Kestrel*, 5754 *Dalton*, 5752 and 5813), and from the same line a most unusual type — the 4-4-2 tank engine (No 6789). Of 4-6-0 engines, the GWR produced a 'Saint' and a 'Star' (Nos 2971 *Albion* and 4048 *Princess Victoria*) and four 'Moguls' (Nos 4300, 4398, 7311 and 7315). From the Brighton line came one 4-4-2 engine (No 40 *St Katherine's Point*), one 4-4-0 type (No 70 *Devonshire*) and five of the ever-useful 4-4-2 tank engines (Nos 21, 27, 32, 81 and 82) and — perhaps pressed into service as it was hardly a passenger-train type the 0-6-2 tank engine No 574. From the LSWR came four 4-4-0s (Nos 122, 314, 400 and 424), from the SECR one of the same-wheel type (No 591) and from the Southern Railway one 'Mogul' (No 869).

16 Examples of working in triplicate were a Leyland employees' outing to Dover on 23 June 1928, British Legion pilgrimage trains from Newcastle for Dover on 5 August, and (pilgrimage of a different sort) a trio of trains from Liverpool to Dover on 2 October carrying cripples from Dublin to Lourdes for healing. These last were brought in by two ex-LNWR 4-6-0 engines Nos 5785 (unnamed), 5643 *King of Serbia* and a 'Claughton' class, No 5943 *Tennyson*. They were handed over to two 4-4-0 engines, Nos E303 and A773 of the LSWR and South Eastern respectively. For the third train there was no engine available, so the *King of Serbia* had to take its train onwards.

17 There was occasional traffic throughout 1929 delivering or removing for scrap various kinds of London Electric Railway 'tube' stock. Bakerloo Line stock was sometimes moved under its own power, and sometimes with a pair of old Piccadilly motorcars as 'engines'. Northward runs of new stock were noted on 12 April, 19 April, 29 July, 2 August, 2 October and 30 December. Southbound stock was worked on 12 and 15 August to Earl's Court and on to Acton for scrapping, and again on 27 September, 2 October and 27 November. There was also a delivery of new District line 'K' stock from the makers, hauled by GWR 4-4-0 engine No 3407 *Madras* on 18 February 1929.

18 This was the first ex-GER engine seen on the line for many years. The last was probably the 0-6-0 engine which worked Pullman cars from Southern to LNER lines on 14 May 1923 and twice subsequently.

19 From the GWR were one 4-6-0, five 4-4-0, three 2-6-0 and five 0-6-0 tender engines, and one 4-4-2, five 2-4-0, two 2-4-2 and nine 0-6-0 tank engines, these last varying from a new pair built in 1929 to one from 1869. The LMS produced one 'Experiment' class 4-6-0, five 0-6-0 engines ranging from the new Fowler design back to the 'Cauliflowers', two post-grouping 2-6-0 engines, and eight heavy 0-8-0 engines, mostly for piloting. Three ex-LNWR 2-4-2 tank engines handled the local passenger and parcels traffic. The LSWR had two 'T9' class 4-4-0 engines and five large and two small 0-4-4 tank types. The Brighton line contributed in old and elegant 'Gladstone' 0-4-2 engine on its very last few days before being scrapped, and four 0-6-2 and one 4-4-2 tank engines. The SECR's one contribution on this day was a 'D1' class 4-4-0 engine.

20 The Hammersmith & City Railway trains had been running for just 30 years. Hitherto, as jointly owned stock, they had been numbered independently but at the grouping of railways they had been transferred to the Metropolitan Railway and renumbered 2208-2247.

21 The merging of the two Battersea engine sheds in July 1934 led to the withdrawal of the Brighton 0-4-4 tank engines from this service, and their replacement by former London, Chatham & Dover Railway engines of the same wheel type. Over the next five years four of these — Nos 661, 664, 666 and 667 — took over this duty.

22 These small four-coupled tank engines, still so prominent on the West London line, were in general being superseded by modern 2-6-2 suburban traffic tank engines and by 1939 many of them had been withdrawn and scrapped.

23 Some examples of special trains noted in the period 1927-1930 and their engine changes in Addison Road are given below. All are excursion or troop trains.

	Train	Engine on arrival	Engine on departure	No of coaches
1927				
16 March	Kensington-Birkenhead		4-4-0 LNWR No 1516 *Alecto*	
10 July	Kensington-Colchester		0-6-0 LMS 4124	
			0-8-0 LMS 9159	26
1928				
21 April	Kensington-Portsmouth		0-4-2 SR B179	23
12 May	Kensington-Bow		4-4-2T LMS 2122	11
20 May	Edinburgh-Kensington	4-6-0 GWR 2946 *Langford Court*	0-8-0 LNWR 485	18
10 June	Kensington-Weedon		4-4-0 LMS 5313 *Etna*	9
23 June	Brighton-Kidderminster	4-4-2T SR B81	4-6-0 GWR 4048 *Princess Victoria*	

	Train	Engine on arrival	Engine on departure	No of coaches
1 July	Watford-Brighton	0-6-2T LMS 6872	4-4-2T SR B88	10
1 July	Portsmouth-Liverpool	4-4-0 SR E168	4-6-0 LMS 5628 *R. B. Sheridan*	
6 July	Nottingham-Dover	4-4-0 LMS 725	4-4-0 SR A739	
21 July	Bristol-Brighton	4-6-0 GWR 2919 *Saint Cuthbert*	4-4-0 SR B55	
26 July	Stoke-Aldershot	4-6-0 LMS 5536 *Derbyshire*	4-4-0 SR E423	10
5 August	Newcastle-Dover	2-6-0 GWR 6339	2-6-0 SR A868	8
5 August	Liverpool-Dover	4-6-0 LMS 5909 *C. M. Lawrence*	4-4-0 SR E431	10
7 August	Oxford-Brighton	4-4-0 GWR 3826 *County of Flint*	4-4-0 SR B67	11
14 September	Dover-Liverpool	4-4-0 SR E417	4-6-0 LMS 5612 *John Keats*	
2 October	Liverpool-Dover	4-6-0 LMS 5943 *Tennyson*	4-4-0 SR A773	11
13 October	Coventry-Chelsea	4-6-0 LMS 5660 *Kestrel*		
10 November	Wolverhampton-Chelsea	4-4-0 LMS 1165		10
21 December	Kensington-Penzance		4-6-0 GWR 5004 *Llanstephan Castle*	
1929				
26 January	Lichfield-Aldershot	4-6-0 LMS 5484 *W. Cawkwell*	4-4-0 SR E404	
26 January	Birmingham-Chelsea	4-4-0 LMS 5283 *R. Brougham* 4-4-0 LMS 1170		12
2 February	Bristol-Chelsea	4-6-0 GWR 2988 *Rob Roy*		12
27 April	Taunton-Chelsea	4-6-0 GWR 2916 *Saint Benedict*		13
27 April	Aston-Chelsea	2-6-0 LMS 13034		15
19 May	Dover-Newcastle	2-6-0 SR A869	4-6-0 GWR 4003 *Lode Star*	11
20 May	Elmsthorpe-Brighton	4-4-0 LMS 5250 *Faerie Queene*	4-4-2T SR B28	8
2 June	Aldershot-Old Trafford	4-4-0 SR E434	0-6-0 LMS 4445 4-4-0 LMS 5326 *W. C. Brocklehurst*	27
15 June	St Albans-Portsmouth	0-6-2T LMS 6936	4-4-0 SR E314	9
15 June	Watford-Brighton	0-6-0 LMS 8536	4-4-0 SR B51	10
15 June	Nuneaton-Margate	4-6-0 LMS 5489 *H. Bessemer*	4-4-0 SR A179	10
15 June	Chippenham-Brighton	4-6-0 GWR 2944 *Highnam Court*	4-4-0 SR B50	10
21 June	Leyland-Dover	4-6-0 LMS 5757	4-4-0 SR A757	12
22 June	(GWR line)-Brighton	4-6-0 GWR 2954 *Tockenham Court*	4-6-4T SR B332	9
13 July	Reading-Margate	4-4-0 GWR 3411 *Stanley Baldwin*	4-4-0 SR A736	9
13 July	Wolverhampton-Brighton	2-6-0 GWR 6390	4-4-2 SR B425 *Trevose Head*	16
13 August	Kensington-Liverpool		4-6-0 LMS 5771 4-4-0 LMS 5194 *Vandal*	16
1930				
5 January	Horley-Wantage Road	0-6-2T SR B583	2-6-0 GWR 4308	13
25 May	Colchester-Kensington	4-6-0 LNER 8545		12
8 June	Crewe-Brighton	4-4-0 LMS 5241 *Napoleon*	4-4-0 SR B50	11
15 June	Kensington-Devonport		4-4-0 SR E161	15
15 June	Kensington-Colchester		0-6-2T LNER 2605	12
20 June	Leyland-Newhaven	4-4-0 LMS 1194	2-6-0 SR B338	12
2 August	Portsmouth-Manchester	2-6-0 SR A808	2-6-0 LMS 13157	10

Some very heavy loadings in the northerly direction will be noted (26 carriages on 10 July 1927, 27 on 2 June 1929 and 16 on 13 August, 1929) all however double-headed. Heavy southbound trains could be handled by a single engine, and the figure of 23 for an elderly Brighton 0-4-2 engine (21 April 1928) is at least partly made up of four-wheeled horse-boxes.

7

War and the Last Years of Independence: 1939-47

At the outbreak of war, that lovely September morning when the sirens howled out false alarms and barrage-balloons sprouted on their stalks to give London its new skyline, many people believed that enemy action would be immediate and devastating. Londoners built shelters of earth and corrugated iron sheets at the bottom of the garden and carried round small gas-masks in cardboard boxes but had need of neither. What they did immediately need was to learn how to move about in total darkness, and the strongest memory of that time for most people is that of trying to have light to live by indoors without letting it out.

The regular train services were for the moment dislocated from the preceding few days mass evacuation of schoolchildren to the country, but soon were back to normal. The role of Addison Road in the evacuation was the entraining of hospital patients, for which its very long platform faces and easy access to them made it especially suitable. London Transport Green Line coaches, converted to ambulances, brought patients right to the carriage doors if necessary, and the station was made rail-head for 18 London hospitals, including the Royal Free, St Mary's, St George's, Charing Cross, London and University College hospitals. Others were served in the same way by Clapham Junction station.

Special troop trains were run from 9 September to 5 October 1939, to move the first half of the British

Below:
Sandbagging at Willesden station in 1939. *IAL*

Expeditionary Force to ports of embarkation, many by way of the West London line, but the normal local passenger services were continued, though the two long-distance holiday trains were withdrawn. There was a minor accident at Willesden on 17 September, when a train from Earl's Court became derailed as it entered the High Level station. Meanwhile 'Casualty Evacuation' trains were prepared, made up of long parcels vans equipped for stretchers and filled with collapsible cardboard coffins, nine vans and three carriages to a train. They were stored at strategic points round London, and part of such a train was kept in the disused southwest bay of Addison Road station. The station windows were blacked out, the name on every lamp painted over, and the big station name-boards painted over in grey to offer no identification.

So little happened however for the rest of the year that Christmas leave was possible for many of the troops in France, and trains for these from Dover passed through London on their way north. A new kind of wartime train now was that for gas cylinders for the balloons. These had to be taken to the many scattered sites, and the trains were composed of 40 'low-fit' trucks each carrying a gas cylinder trailer on road wheels for off-loading at the nearest railway station. They were a familiar sight on the line, running to express-freight timings.

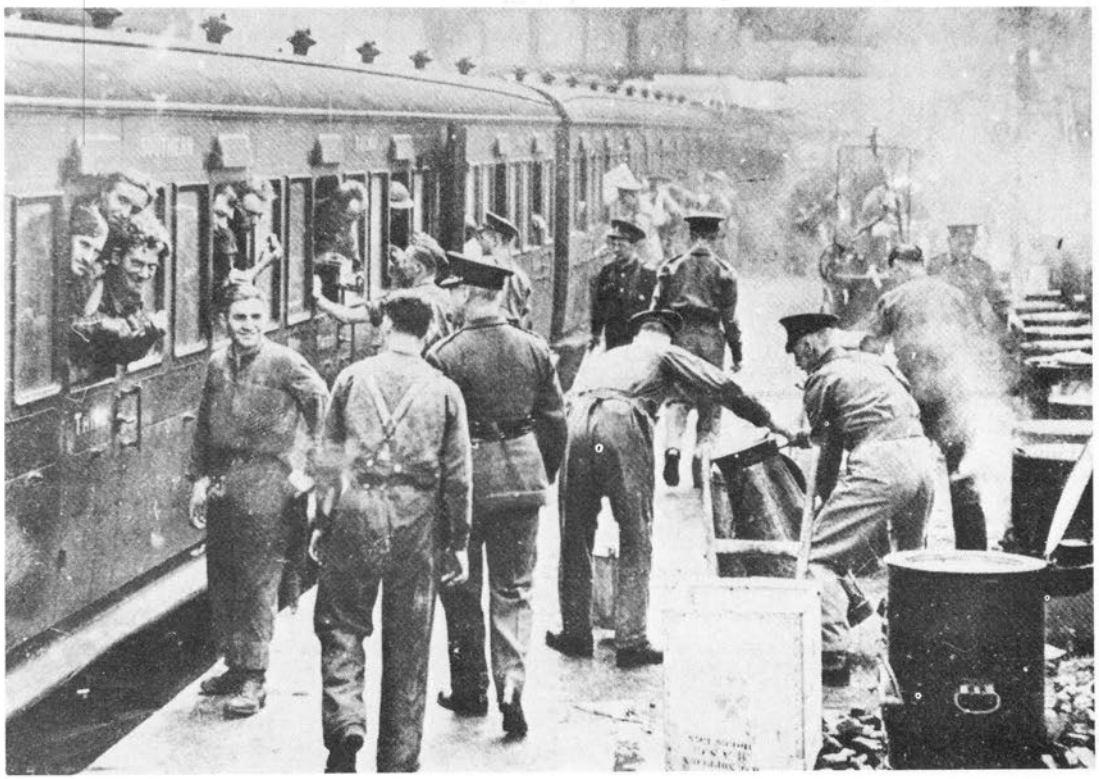
At the beginning of 1940 the second contingent of

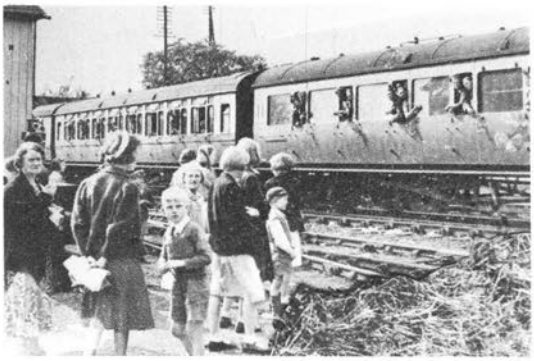
Above:
A 1939 evacuation train carries child patients from hospital away from Kensington. *IAL*

Below:
The evacuation from Dunkirk meant that Kensington was taken over by the Army Catering Corps as a feeding station for troops. *Imperial War Museum*

Right:
Feeding evacuated troops in 1940. *Imperial War Museum*

Below right:
French troops were also rescued in 1940 — these ones are on a GWR train. *GWR*





the British Expeditionary Force was moved out, many north-to-south troop trains operating between 7 January and 9 February, but in general there was not nearly so much war traffic by rail as there had been in the corresponding months of the previous war — no huge trains of ammunition daily, no long trains of horse-boxes, no daily ambulance train. The motor lorry, Army or requisitioned, was the main carrier, and the West London line, though still important, was not for the moment the vital link it had been a quarter of a century before. Acton had become the principal marshalling yard for war supplies to the ports (in one day in 1939, 5,303 wagons were handled there) though Lillie Bridge sidings took some of the load. There was some stagnation in coal traffic until 'Convoy Coal Trains' were organised.[1].

Then in May the Low Countries were invaded, the French and British armies forced into retreat, and it soon became desperately necessary to withdraw a third of a million men from a beach-head at Dunkerque. Dover had first to be cleared of troops waiting there[2] and on 27 May the main evacuation began. This was only notified to the railways at 5pm on the previous day and had to start at dawn, so there was no time for working notices to be issued, and everything had to be done by telephone or runner. Then in nine days to 4 June the railways ran 565 troop trains, moving 294,948 men, a gigantic operation by any standard. Dover was the principal port to be cleared, but other ports had their share.[3]. As the town had to be defended continuously by the Royal Air Force, trains were despatched when full without any known destination and 'sorted' for onward routing when they reached the first 'key point' — usually Redhill. Trains for the North were sent up to London, mostly through Addison Road where all local services had been suspended and the station handed over to the Army Catering Corps for a vast feeding operation for the passing troops. The 'peak' two days were 31 May and 1 June, with 107 and 110 special trains respectively, nearly half of which were worked north by the West London route. At one time GWR troop trains were seen waiting one behind the other at

North Pole Junction for access to the main line westwards. To these were added on 2 June many of the 32 special trains evacuating children from the Kentish ports. Trains had to be worked back empty for further loads, and mingled with them were 17 ambulance trains and emergency trains of coal for the locomotives concentrated in Kent; these could not even be spared for shed attention, and had to dump their ashes on the running lines, which then had to be cleared by hand.

The engines used for all this were of a wide mixture of types. Southern Railway engines handled the largest share but all sorts of unlikely combinations were noted (or rather remembered — one dared not take notes at the time).[4] By the end of the operation the total number of troops moved was 319,056, which included nearly 90% of the British Expeditionary Force and many French as well.

A short period of calm followed, but with the Luftwaffe at Calais everyone knew that the lull must end soon. An odd train from Addison Road on 19 July 1940 was one to convey the staff of the French Embassy to Liverpool to return home by way of a neutral country. It was an embarrassing occasion all round. France had surrendered and been occupied and become enemy territory, feelings ran high, and that part of the embassy staff who did not want to join the Free French in exile had to be removed and repatriated as quickly as possible.

Above:
The evacuation of French Embassy staff from Kensington in 1940 for repatriation.
Ministry of Information

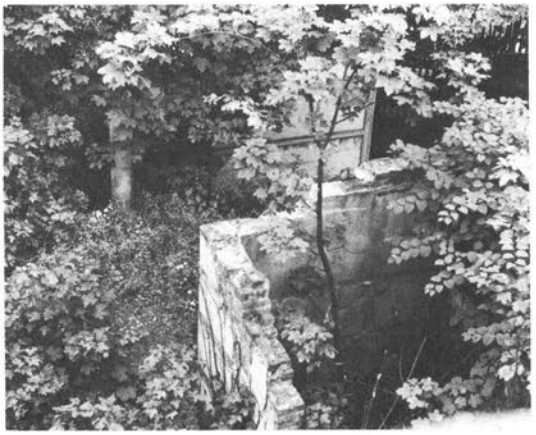
Below:
Kensington left roofless after bombing in 1940 and 1944.

The results of having the enemy in France were soon felt. In July the London sirens sounded after nine months of silence, by August exploratory air raids were getting closer to London, and by September the heavy bombing began.

Meanwhile, with the southern ports out of use — in that they had no continental ports left to serve — there was a sharp drop in through traffic save for the

regular trains of balloon gas. The local passenger services were resumed, and the line also saw the passing of several Southern engines now no longer needed on their home metals and loaned to railways in the north.[5] Heavy bombing of London started in the autumn, and no one who was there at the time will ever forget 7 or 11 September — they became known simply as 'the Saturday' and 'the Wednesday'. From then on, indiscriminate bombing became the nightly misery, and the West London line, along with the rest of the Royal Borough of Kensington, received its share of the hate. On the night of 9/10 September the first bomb fell on the line; hitting the line at West Brompton station it failed to explode but effectively stopped traffic till it could be disarmed. Three nights later another fell on the same spot and did explode, scattering debris as it tore up rails and ballast, and from then on to the end of the year at least 50 bombs fell on or beside the line.[6] Most of these fell in September and October, after which the defences improved and the raids, though still frequent, were not of the same intensity. By October St Quintin Park station had been destroyed, Uxbridge Road station and its goodyards hit nine times and the Hammersmith & City connection cut, Addison Road hit four times, West Brompton three times, and Battersea station burned out. Addison Road received its worst damage on the night of 20/21 October, three bombs in Russell Road partially wrecking the east side station buildings and tearing away many of the platform canopies. Bombs which failed to explode could still close the line and removal was a delicate business, since they might be fused for delayed detonation. One such fell in the very centre of Addison Road station, between the up and down main lines, on the night of 13/14 September but was safely removed.[7]

If the foregoing sounds a lot of bombing, it is small when compared with bomb damage in London generally. There was certainly no element of strategy about it. The enemy probably understood just where the vital links were, but were quite unable to pinpoint them when it came to letting the bombs go. Cremorne Viaduct was perhaps the most strategically important bridge in London but was untouched. Warm tribute should certainly be paid to the signalmen on the line. Seated as they were high up, behind wall-sized glass windows, they had to note if they could where every near bomb fell and signal accordingly. Dangerous work was done by repair crews in 'Express Units' — these would hurry to the site of any vital main line damage (as for instance Uxbridge Road on 12/13 October) and lay new rails if they could even while the air raid was still on. By now the frequency (and duration) of air raids called for some revision of the operating rules if any service was to be run at all. Speed limits were raised, and the rather stupid rule about changing headlights (in the middle of a raid, to show that the driver knew about it) was dropped.[8] By the spring of 1941 the RAF had gained mastery of the sky over London by night as well as day, and the bombs which fell on the line at Shepherds Bush on 8/9 March were the last to fall for several years.



Top:
Looking south in 1966, West Brompton station which was damaged in 1940 and dismantled after the war.

Above:
The remains of Battersea station building after the 1940 bombing.

After this the menace came to be that of invasion, and once more the railway traffic reflected the changed conditions. With Kent and Sussex horribly open to enemy invasion it was necessary to move out, from a coastal belt some 30 miles deep, every kind of material and stores that the enemy might use, and there was a steady south-to-north traffic over the West London line for this.[9] At the end of 1941 the danger of parachute troops landing was still considered real, and for the worst eventuality — Kent and Sussex 'occupied' — a full timetable of evacuation trains was worked out, with Addison Road as one of the main clearing stations. Even with reduced passenger traffic a shortage of locomotives was beginning to be felt, and the only new building the Government allowed was that of 30 'Merchant Navy' class 4-6-2 engines for the Southern Railway

in 1941, and nothing further until 1943.[10] Goods wagons were not in such short supply, as some 592,000 in private hands were requisitioned and added to a 'wagon pool' which eventually numbered about 1,237,000, and more were being built all the time. From September 1941 a regular item of war traffic through Addison Road was new goods wagons built in the Ashford Works of the Southern Railway.[11]

By the autumn of 1942 the danger of invasion had receded to the extent that troops could be redeployed, and from 7 to 26 November of that year 12 troop trains moved men from the southeast coast to the north, by way of the West London line.

The year 1943 was the real turning point of the war — the enemy halted in Russia, Africa cleared, Italy invaded — and very slowly the pattern of rail traffic at home changed once again — west to east as more and more American troops were landed, north to south as the dangers of invasion receded and the first stages of the eventual vast build-up of the South as a gigantic arsenal could be started.[12]

In 1944 the West London line came back into the pattern when the invasion build-up at last began. This was basically in three phases. The first was the movement of lighter stores from 26 March, along with many troops; this phase, which lasted two months, required 24,459 special trains, mostly north to south and a large proportion over West London metals. The next phase started on 10 May and involved heavy equipment, including moving some 7,000 tanks on 800 trains. The third phase started three weeks before the invasion date and brought the mass of the troops — 9,679 special trains were run, 3,636 of them in the final week. All this was a tremendous strain on available locomotive power, and it is fortunate that the railways had latterly been allowed some new engines.

The invasion of France, though it led to victory, brought immediate and unpleasant results at home. On 16 June 1944 the first of a new kind of missile hit London — the pilotless flying bomb, fuelled to run out of power anywhere over the sprawling city and glide to the ground to explode on impact. As it seldom dived very deep into the earth the full blast spread outwards and did great damage, comparable with that from the parachuted mines four years earlier. In four months about 2,300 of them hit London. One hit the line by Viaduct Junction and destroyed the Wood Lane milk depot on 30 June 1944, and three days later, out of a clear summer sky at three o'clock in the afternoon, one landed beside Addison Road station, exploding in Russell Road about a hundred yards north of the station buildings. These, already damaged from earlier raids, were now still further wrecked, and most of the remaining platform awnings blown off their brackets. A long length of wall to the northeast bay was also wrecked, and debris flung over the lines.

London was now to suffer many such incidents, and a fresh evacuation of children, often of whole families, was soon under way. Between 5 July and 6 August about 1,400 evacuation trains were run, mostly to the west, and when a few months later a much worse missile — the V2 rocket — arrived still more children had to be moved out of harm's way. London was (as Churchill put it) 'the unique target of the world for the use of a weapon of such inaccuracy'. Incidentally, the great man himself used Addison Road station a good deal, as it was near to the invasion headquarters at St Paul's School building. A LMSR driver recalls how he was sent from there as pilot on a Southern engine to fetch the special train (known only as the 'M599') from Canonbury for the Prime Minister to entrain at Addison Road for the South Coast.

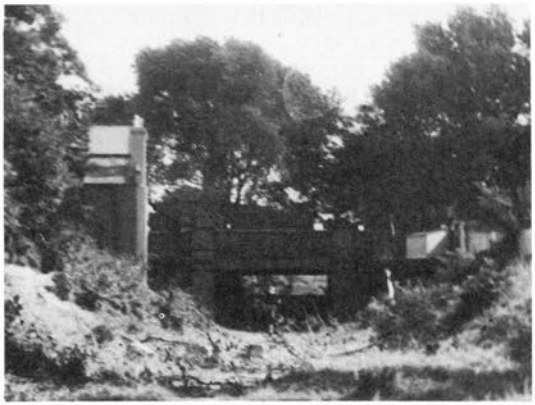
Traffic after the invasion was very heavy — indeed the four weeks following the landing were the

Below:
Uxbridge Road station with the platforms removed in 1966.

Above right:
The abandoned track-bed of the LSWR line to Richmond in 1947.

Right:
Chelsea station in 1966, flats having been built on the site.

Below right:
The first postwar passenger service. A train of ex-District Railway stock on the Earl's Court service in December 1946.

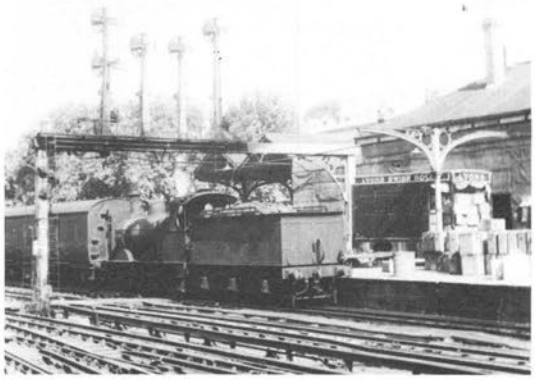


busiest in railway history — and to quote but one example, soldiers' mail grew to such proportions that three long trains a day were being sent from Nottingham by way of Addison Road to Dover, a figure that rose to 16 as Christmas approached. By 1945 the pressure on the southern ports was eased, as more East Coast ports could be used, and military traffic by the West London line dwindled, though the Forces Mail trains, passing through four times a day, ran until 15 April 1946.[13]

Northbound traffic included ambulance trains, and occasionally trains of German prisoners, because these could not, for obvious reasons, be turned loose on station platforms for feeding, they had corridor rolling stock, to the disgruntlement of watching passengers who had to travel in much inferior accommodation. The complaints (just as in the previous war) even led to questions in Parliament, and the Secretary of State for War had solemnly to explain why it would be undesirable to have hundreds of prisoners running round every time the train stopped.

At the end of the war the West London Joint Railways were in no position to restore passenger services. Addison Road was battered and roofless, St Quintin Park and Battersea stations completely obliterated by bombs, and the other stations in varying states of decay. With the prospect of nationalisation hanging over them none of the partner railways were prepared to spend anything on repairs or improvements. A sparse shuttle service to Clapham Junction had been maintained through most of the war for the employees of Messrs Lyons and the Post Office, but apart from this the only

Right:
MR 0-6-0 No 3196 of 1875 on loan to the GWR, on milk train in 1947.



passenger service resumed was that of London Transport special trains for shows at Olympia. These ran first on 19 December 1946 using former District Railway stock, and Addison Road was renamed Kensington (Olympia) in their honour. The trains used the south end of the down platform line as terminus, but as this meant twice crossing the down main line every trip to Earl's Court, the inconvenience of it led to the building in November 1947 of a platform face to the so long disused southwest bay line, just 80 years after the original contractor had failed to do so. At first excavation was made for two tracks, but this was modified before completion to one track with a correspondingly wider platform for the new facility. Later, in 1958, an independent single line was built through the spare arch of Addison Bridge to give direct access to the Underground lines.

There were also occasional through excursion trains on the line — one noted was a Great Western one going south on 25 November 1946 well filled — but most of the traffic was now parcels, foodstuffs and milk. As the milk trains now used the northeast bay as well as the traditional northwest one, the crates of food from Lyon's Cadby Hall factory now occupied the up platform for much of its length.

At the end of 1947 the railways were handed over to the state, and the travelling public sat back with a wary eye on politicians' promises and wondered what the Railway Executive was going to make of nationalised ownership and operation.

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1 Early in 1940 it was reported that 700 loaded coal wagons had been stuck in sidings for a month. The situation was improved by running single-destination coal trains which could be worked without remarshalling en route. Known as 'Convoy Coal Trains' they could carry 600 tons of coal in 50 continuous-braked wagons.

2 Some 28,000 troops had earlier been withdrawn from Belgium and held in Dover for possible reassignment further south along the French coast. When this was found impracticable they had to be moved quickly from Dover to make way for the coming influx. Operation 'Dynamo' to clear Dover was set up and moved 24,108 troops in the week of 20-26 May in 55 trains, many of them to the North via the West London line.

3 A total of 325 trains was run from Dover, 83 from Ramsgate, 76 from Margate, 64 from Folkestone and 17 from Sheerness.

4 The trains were heavy, usually of 12 and sometimes of 14 carriages and piloting was often necessary. Of the ex-SECR 4-4-0 engines that tackled these enormous loads unassisted, nine are known to have been Nos 1756, 1758 and 1759 with 12-coach trains, and Nos 1492, 1494, 1507, 1509, 1727 and 1747 on trains of 14 coaches. Some locomotive combinations seen were an ex-LSWR 4-6-0 engine piloted by a 'Brighton' 4-6-2 tank engine, and the ex-SECR 4-4-0 No 1783 piloted by the ex-LSWR 4-4-0 engine No 586 (a veteran of some 50 years). The LMSR used mostly its 'Stanier' 4-6-0 express engines, and the GWR used mainly its 4-6-0 'Hall' and 2-6-0 'Mogul' classes. A harassed railway official remarked that 'anything might turn up anywhere'. The 180 trains used in the main operation (that is, from 27 May) were provided by the LMSR (40 trains), LNER (47), GWR (40) and SR (53). As a whole it was a magnificent demonstration of the railways' resources in time of grave need.

5 The West London line saw the passage of a considerable number of Southern Railway engines to the North as now no longer needed on their home metals. To the far North went nine elderly 4-4-0 engines from the South Eastern Railway — Nos 1156, 1188, 1195, 1028, 1084, 1205, 1060, 1062 and 1078 — and they all gave good service and were duly returned in 1944. Ex-Brighton line engines loaned were two 'B4' class 4-4-0 engines, Nos 2051 and 2068. Then in 1941 seven 'Brighton' 0-4-2 tank engines went on loan to the LMSR — Nos 2232, 2240, 2286, 2358, 2605, 2727 and 2699 — and in 1943 two more — Nos 2229 and 2284. There was also a number of 4-6-0 engines loaned by the Southern to the Great Western Railway and stabled at Old Oak Common — and therefore seen frequently on interchange traffic. These included Nos 496-499 from the LSWR, 478 from the Southern, and 2327 and 2332 from the Brighton line. These last were rebuilds of the large 4-6-4 tank engines of 1914 and 1922 respectively, No 327 having carried the name of *Charles C. Macrae* and been often seen on through excursion trains in the 1930s. Upon conversion in 1935 to tender engines they were named *Trevithick* and *Stroudley* respectively. Apart from these 'loans' from the south, other loaned engines were also seen on the line, including several ex-Midland Railway 0-6-0 goods engines lent to the GWR.

6 A list of 'incidents' for Hammersmith and Kensington boroughs alone reports 35 instances of bombing on only a part of the line. There were just as many hits to the south of these boroughs, and Battersea station was hit and burnt out. The list that follows gives dates and locations, but not

the number of bombs. A few were single-bomb hits, but most were from 'sticks' of several bombs in quick succession.

Date	Location
September	
9/10	West Brompton station (unexploded)
12/13	West Brompton station
	West Cromwell Road Bridge
	Warwick Road Goods station
13/14	Addison Road station, centre of tracks (unexploded)
	North Pole Junction
15/16	Mitre Bridge
17/18	West Cromwell Road Bridge
	Uxbridge Road station, spur line to Latimer Road
	Shepherds Bush goods yard
18/19	North Pole Junction, south of signalbox
22/23	Addison Road station, northwest corner (Sinclair Road)
	Richmond Junction (on disused Hammersmith line)
24/25	Addison Bridge
	Warwick Road goods yard
	Ashleigh Cottages (beside line). Through lines at the same point (unexploded)
25/26	Uxbridge Road station, spur line to Latimer Road
October	
1/2	Mitre Bridge (line to Low Level)
	Viaduct Junction (line to Wood Lane)
2/3	St Quintin Park station (incendiary only)
3/4	Addison Bridge (unexploded)
11/12	Shepherds Bush (cutting south of Uxbridge Road)
	Shepherds Bush goods yard
12/13	Uxbridge Road station, main lines
13/14	Shepherds Bush goods yard
	West Brompton station (incendiary only)
20/21	Latimer Road (top of spur embankment)
	Viaduct Junction
	Addison Road station (Russell Road)
	Lillie Bridge sidings
November	
23/24	St Quintin Park station
December	
20/21	Uxbridge Road station
January	
5/6	Mitre Bridge
March	
8/9	Shepherds Bush goods yard

Other bombs fell on the line in other boroughs — Chelsea and Battersea — but the corresponding records are not available.

7 In view of the frequency of raids and the damage done to stations and track, it was decided to suspend all local services. Thus the last Willesden-Earl's Court service ran on 2 October, the last to Edgware Road and to Clapham Junction on 19 October. The Clapham Junction train was later reinstated as a workmen's train, but the other two services never reappeared, although the much-severed link from Uxbridge Road to Latimer Road was repaired and relaid.

8 From 11 November 1940 the unrealistic limits of 15mph (passenger) and 10mph (goods) during alerts were raised to 25mph and 15mph, with 15mph for all traffic during blackout hours, and the complicated business of changing headlamps during alerts was given up. The rule had been to stop, put one lamp over the centre of the buffer-beam to show 'warning received', proceed, then stop again to remove the lamp at the 'all clear' signal. While on Southern electric trains this was merely a matter of the motorman playing on his switchboard, on steam locomotives it meant useless stops and clamberings on to the track in pitch darkness and had been a total waste of time. At the same time the rules were changed about passenger trains halting during alerts to warn passengers; this was now to be done not at the next station but at the first booked stop. Engine drivers could seldom hear the alert sirens anyway, and signalmen conveyed the alert to drivers when possible.

9 For a time it was even considered dangerous to leave any but the scantiest quantities of petroleum products in this area overnight, and a minimum necessary of these was kept in tank-wagons moved into the area by day and withdrawn by night.

10 The Government had already requisitioned 378 goods engines (of which 138 had been lost in France) and in June 1941 the Ministry of War Transport commandeered 151 new locomotives that had been intended for home railways. In 1943 and 1944 however both 2-8-0 and 2-10-0 heavy goods engines were built in large numbers and eased the situation.

11 The new goods wagons were built at Ashford mainly for war use overseas, and were assembled with the help of cut timber and fabricated metal parts sent south by goods trains which then removed the finished product. About 1,600 were built in five months and despatched at the rate of six or seven trains a month. At Ashford 171 men, women and boys worked a 67hr week to prdouce a wagon every 37min in a splendid example of high-pressure war work. In 1942 the same works was producing thousands of segments for the new Bailey bridge, kept as far as possible secret by being loaded packed tight in open trucks and sheeted over. Other products were 308 landing craft, 75 bomb-trolleys, 70 fifty-ton well-wagons, and 2,000 tail-fins for aerial torpedos, and most of this output was duly moved to the north through Longhedge Junction and the West London line.

12 In December 1943 the LMSR claimed to have run its 100,000th wartime special train, the figure made up of 52,603 trains for troops, 25,288 for stores, 6,799 for ammunition, and 15,310 for petrol, which will give an idea of the railways' total involvement. It is also worth noting that a 'thousand bomber raid' needed 28 trains of petrol and eight trains of bombs to 'provision' it.

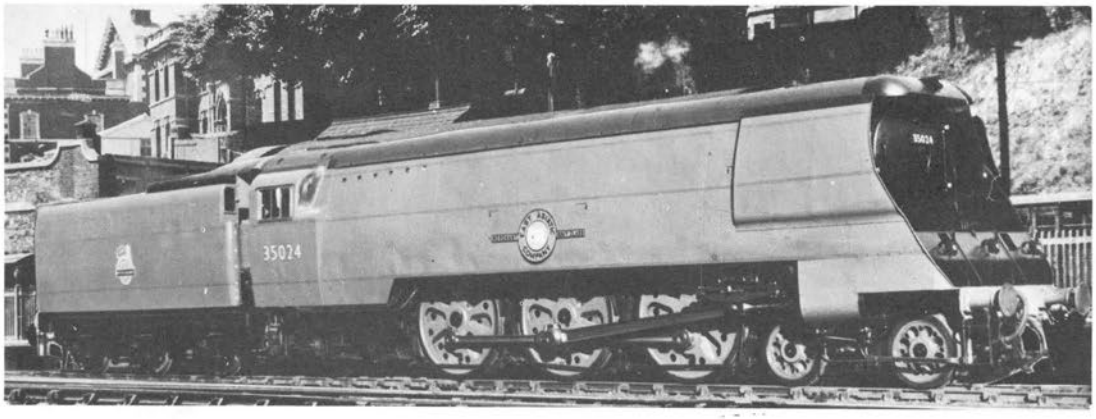
13 The Forces Mail trains were made up of four-wheeled boxcars carrying some 300 mailbags apiece and left Nottingham at night, usually behind ex-GNR 'K3' class 2-6-0 engines (No 28 a regular engine on this run) handing over to a Southern engine at Addison Road around 3am.

8
The First 20 Years of Nationalised Operation: 1948-67

The new Railway Executive inherited about 24,000 miles of assorted railway and some 19,000 even more assorted steam locomotives, a large proportion of both being worn out from over-use and under-maintenance inevitable in the war. The four railways had, it is true, been able to build some 800 new locomotives, but little had been done to improve permanent way and stations. The new Executive had no vast funds to bring to the task of renovation, and apart from dividing the country's railways into Regions and sorting out a few anomalies, the new management made few evident changes in the next few years. What did happen was that centralised control was carried too far and became too unwieldy, a fact that was not realised until 1951, when control was decentralised into Area Boards with immediate improvement. The small West London Joint Railway, now for the first time under one management (it had been allotted to the Western Region) reflected the general depression. Its stations were damaged and still roofless, its local passenger service was one train making four short trips per day, and, serving small and uneconomic goods yards that had outlived their purpose, its local goods trains lost most of their trade to the motor lorry.

In the next 20 years there were to be many changes — some features abandoned, some modified, some wholly new — and these should now be reviewed, going from north to south along the line, for this period as a whole. Willesden High Level station, which had already lost its Earl's Court bay platform when the through goods line was restored in 1940, was now in need of general structural repair. The opportunity was therefore taken to resite it slightly further north, and the new station came into use in September 1956. The main line station below it was closed in 1962, leaving only the booking-office building to be used as offices. The 1844 station house at West London Junction still stood, used as a dwelling house for a retired railway employee. From the junction (with the main line) to a point just short of

Below:
LSWR 4-4-0 No 30119 (ex-119) of 1899 in green BR livery, heading a parcels train in 1949. *C. C. B. Herbert*



Above:
***East Asiatic Company*, the SR 4-6-2, No 35024, in BR livery.** *W. J. Reynolds*

Left:
SR 2-6-0 No 31894 (ex-1894) of 1931 on train in 1950 to the LM Region. *IAL*

Below left:
The Ministry of Supply 2-10-0 No 3690 of 1944 was used for occasional transfer traffic.

Mitre Bridge overhead electric wires were latterly erected to facilitate shunting and the changeover of diesel and electric locomotives on through trains. There were 'lay-by' sidings for this purpose at both West London Junction and Mitre Bridge. Several goods sidings on the north side of the line were abandoned, and one short new one put in near Mitre Bridge to serve a United Dairies milk depot. The extensive yard of what had been Mitre Bridge electric train sheds was abandoned, and the connection with the High Level line taken out. Going on southwards, North Pole Junction was unchanged, complete with catch-siding and sand-drag for runaway goods trains. That it was still needed was shown by a repetition of the 1923 accident there almost 30 years later to the day.[1]

St Quintin Park station, destroyed by bombs in 1940, was not rebuilt and only the brick pillars out of the embankment on either side mark its site. Viaduct Junction, where the line from the Ealing & Shepherds Bush Railway joined, was closed from March 1964 and officially abandoned in May 1965 though the lines were left in place for several years. As this line had provided access to the Wood Lane milk depot by reversal at Wood Lane signalbox, this was from 1966 given by a short crossover line linking the south end of the depot with the north end of one of the Shepherds Bush siding lines. The former two companies' adjacent goods depots at Shepherds Bush were closed in November 1967, but one line was left to serve a factory. The substantial brick house of the first Shepherds Bush station (of 1844) still stood, but the adjacent signalbox was dismantled in 1959 when the rails to the spur from Latimer Road were lifted. This short line, damaged by bombs at both ends in 1940, seems to have been relaid, as it was not officially closed until 1 March 1954, but no service used it. Uxbridge Road station remained complete but derelict, with platform facings removed and the White City footbridge taken down.

The next stretch of line, in the shallow cutting south to the site of Richmond Junction, was unchanged — indeed it could be said to be the only surviving feature of the original line of 1840 — and at its south end the long steel road bridge, three times the width of the tracks it crosses, is a reminder that from here started the line round to Hammersmith (Grove Road) and Richmond. Although closed in June 1916 the stations and rails remained in place for

the next dozen years (said to have been at the request of the Government) and only by 1929 were the rails lifted and sites sold for building large blocks of flats. The stations at Hammersmith and Shepherds Bush lasted until 1954 and 1956 respectively. At Richmond Junction there stands an elegant cast iron parish boundary marker proclaiming 'Hammersmith Parish 1868. J&H. Gwynne, Engineers, Hammersmith' put there when they were excavating for the LSWR's new line. A siding to provide a longer head-shunt for long Motorail trains was built here in 1966, using part of the bed of the junction line. The station buildings of Addison Road station were in a poor state at the end of the war, the east (or up) side especially battered, and both were dismantled, starting with the west side on 12 June 1958. The rebuilding of the southwest bay to serve District trains was described in the last chapter. The northwest bay was now completely rebuilt, from two lines to four, for its new function as a Motorail terminal and the whole covered by a large shed. At the same time a small new station building, in modern style in white concrete, was built on the site of the old down side building and opened on 24 May 1966.

The electric rails on the line were removed piecemeal, those from North Main signalbox to Mitre Bridge Junction in 1952, from the station except for the down platform line from 1956, and from that line from 1958 when the new bay line and station came into use. Kensington Middle box, spanning four lines at the centre of the station on girders, was dismantled in February 1958, and the rods for the point-work and the signal-wires led to South Main box, which in turn was completely renovated at the same time.[2] As a boy I had more or less haunted this signalbox 50 years before, and it was interesting to see now (this was in 1966) that some of the old telegraph instruments of that time were still operating. A train-describer, for instance, of the old peg-in-hole type was still in use to warn Latchmere Junction where southbound trains wanted to go — and still labelled with the names of companies 45 years out-of-date

Top:
Entering Kensington station in 1950 is the 1933 GWR 4-6-0 No 5940 *Whitbourne Hall*. *IAL*

Centre:
Heading for the South of England in 1951 is this SR 2-6-4T No 31913 (ex-1913) of 1932, passing through Warwick Road goods yard. *G. Clarke*

Above:
GWR 0-6-0PT No 7791 of 1930 on a short goods train to Warwick Road goods yard in 1951. *E. D. Bruton*

such as 'Stewarts Lane SE&CR' or 'Battersea Yard LB&SC and so on. The only change to the southeast bay was the removal of the short engine 'lay-by'. South of Addison Bridge there were considerable changes of track layout, basically to give a wholly independent route for District trains to Earl's Court. The work was done in four stages spread over five weeks in February and March 1958, and left the former down main line as a siding, the former up main reserved for down working, and a former siding east of it made into the new up main line.[3]

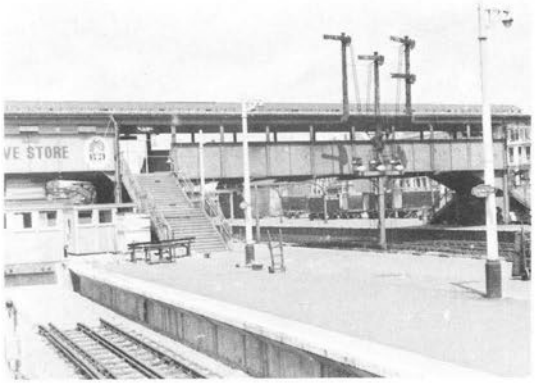
Earl's Court Junction signalbox was removed (there being no more junction) and the whole electric line signalled 'blind' from West Kensington station. Warwick Road goods yard was closed, but the rails were still in position in 1967. The Lillie Bridge sidings, once so important for exchange traffic, were lifted progressively; of the eight on the west side (including the one which ran through West Brompton station behind the down platform) only four remained in 1967, while two of the east side sidings were retained for wagon storage, mainly of empty car-carrying stock. Adjacent to these remained untouched the oldest buildings of all, the Kensington Canal lock-keeper's cottage of 1828 and the Thames Junction Railway's 'boardroom' as built on to it in 1844. West Brompton station, still complete in 1955, had by 1966 been wholly dismantled save for the girders spanning the lines where the station house had stood. The small goods and coal depot as its south end was by 1966 disconnected and abandoned. Chelsea station, of much more solid construction, remained until about 1955 when a block of flats was built on the west side, the stone paving of the platforms remaining till after 1966. Chelsea Dock remained in use, but its traffic declined and by 1966 it was used mainly for storing old goods wagons. Some of its shorter lines, mainly those served by the small turntables of the previous

Top:
SR 4-4-0 No 30923 (ex-923) *Bradfield* of 1933 on an excursion to the Eastern Region in 1952. *IAL*

Centre:
LNER 4-6-0 No 61316 taking over a Ramsgate-Sheffield train in 1953. *S. C. Nash*

Above:
This SR 0-6-0, No 33036, was seen in 1960 on a Hastings-Birmingham train. *S. C. Nash*

century, had been removed in the period 1950-67, along with the single spur that curved under the approach-bridge to the viaduct to serve the Neuchatel Asphalt Co at its riverside wharf.[4] The spur to the gasworks had been lifted by 1965.



Top:
Demolition of the west side buildings of Kensington station in 1958.

Above:
The new Kensington (Olympia) terminal bay for Earl's Court services as seen in 1958.

Below:
The new Kensington (Olympia) building, this time in 1971.

Battersea station had completely disappeared at line level, only fragments of the bombed brickwork surviving at the foot of the embankment and a boarded-up door on to the street. Latchmere Junction had lost its western-most lines in 1936 (those serving Waterloo) but the rest of the lines were unchanged. Clapham Junction (the Platforms 16 and 17 that represented the West London Extension Railway's own station) were unaltered except for the removal of the engine-release crossover after the end of steam working.[5]

Apart from the Kensington-Clapham Junction service and the occasional District Line service for Olympia, there were no booked passenger services over the line until 1949, when an effort was made to reintroduce some of the long-distance through services of the past. In the summer of that year a start was made with a weekend train from Birmingham to Eastbourne, and this ran for 15 years. Another service from Leicester and Market Harborough to Brighton ran for 12. From 1950 another train ran from what was now called the London Midland Region from Manchester to Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings, lasting for 10 years. The Western Region put on one from Wolverhampton and Birmingham to Brighton which ran for 14 years. All these trains though were only a very minor part of the line's traffic, running mostly only at summer weekends, and their interest lies mainly in the engines they brought to the scene. Other services, mostly short-lived, were Cardiff-Brighton, Newcastle-Dover, and Sheffield-Hastings. Engines were usually changed at Willesden (which had a turntable) but often the engines required would be worked light-engine to Kensington for the changeover there.[6] Older and smaller engines, often of pre-grouping days, still hauled passenger trains; the 'Brighton' 4-4-2 engines were frequent visitors as they had been

Above:
CR 4-2-2 No 123 of 1886 passed through Kensington in 1953 for display at Battersea. *P. Winding*

Right:
No 3440 *City of Truro*, a GWR 4-4-0 of 1901, was specially adorned with the Westward TV headboard for exhibition at Kensington in 1961. *Photofair*

before the war. There was an occasion (26 June 1958) when two identical trains got halted on North Pole bank in turn, and the one headed by the old SECR 4-4-0 engine No 31777 got away unaided while the other train, with the modern Southern Railway 'Schools' 4-4-0 engine No 31900, did not, having to call up a banking engine to get going. An even more interesting variety of steam engines were to be seen on excursions and troop-special trains,[7] while in the winter football specials sometimes produced odd locomotive workings.[8] A good example of the complexity of such traffic to unusual destinations is the working of two football specials on 13 December 1952, both coming from the Eastern Region. They were from Walthamstow to Haydons Road hauled by engine No 61119 and from Ilford to Carshalton on the same day hauled by engine No 61399. To overcome the problems of turning these engines round they were exchanged, running light via Wimbledon and Mitcham Junction for the return journeys. The annual Cup Final match at Wembley continued to demand a large number of special trains from the provinces, and as usual Kensington acted as a relief terminus for incoming trains from the North, as well as passing through those from the Southern lines; on 12 March 1956 for example six trains from the South of England followed one another through for Wembley, every one headed by an ex-'Southern' 4-6-2 engine. In 1965 Kensington began to take over traffic of a new kind, termed Motorail. For half a century the private car had been filching traffic from the railways, but by now something like saturation point had been reached on many roads in the holiday seasons. The frustrations of going by car on holiday were such

that the alternative of a bed in a train overnight with the car loaded at the back became highly attractive. It was really only a reversion to the practice of a full century earlier, when you took your carriage with you. Already by 1956 a Manchester-Dover 'car train' was passing through and by 1965 Kensington began its own service with a train to Fishguard, and part of the station was rebuilt to be 'The biggest and best Motorail Terminal in Europe' and opened in May 1966. The growth of this new service will be described in the next chapter.

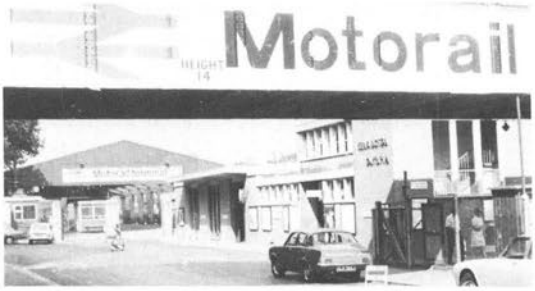
Above:
Another 'exhibition' visitor was LNER Pacific No 4472 *Flying Scotsman*, at Kensington Olympia during the Castrol Great Motor Extravaganza in August 1974.
Kevin Lane

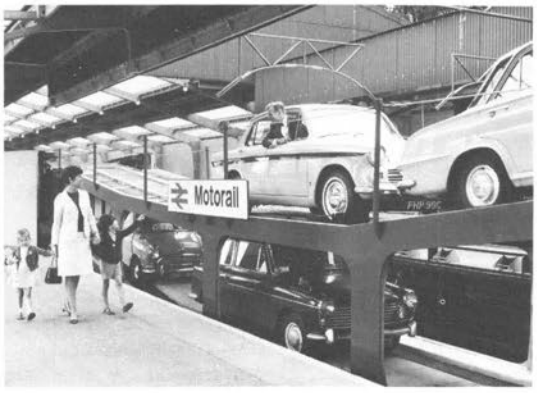
Below:
Kensington, seen from North Main signalbox, with new bays at right for the Motorail terminal.

For two periods Kensington served as a relief station for incoming main line services. The first was quite a long one — April 1963 to June 1965 — while Euston station was being rebuilt, and many overnight trains were diverted and their passengers taken on by District line trains. The second period was a much shorter one — 15 October to 19 November 1967 — to allow part of Paddington to be closed for major track and signalling alterations. The fairly busy use of the platforms made one disadvantage very clear — there was no protection when it rained. For arriving passengers this did not matter so much, but for those for departing trains it was highly inconvenient, though the waiting room for the Motorail passengers could be used at the hours it was open. A special service of connecting District line trains was run to conform with the timetable of arriving and departing trains, but they did not give much margin of time for the main line departures.

Turning now to the motive power used on the line, there was still some variety. Nationalisation was promptly heralded at Kensington station early in 1948 with a display of modern express passenger locomotives painted in a variety of trial liveries[9] They made an impressive display but no firm decision was taken yet as to the hue to be used, and later experiments were made with a bright blue, and over the next 10 years further colours were tried out.

The days however of steam traction were numbered. About 1957 — just 50 years after Dr Diesel had tried his 'displosive locomotive' on a Swiss railway — the machine that was to be known by his name had achieved that reliability necessary for





Top:
Motorail terminal buildings in 1971.

Above:
Cars loaded at Kensington Motorail terminal. *BR*

Below:
The additional loading ramp for Motorail in Kensington's northeast bay, 1971.

serious adoption, and the pattern for future haulage in Britain was becoming clear — electric for the northwest and south, and diesel everywhere else. In 1958 British Railways was still building steam engines but at the same time had on order 484 diesel locomotives of a dozen different types. The next year no more steam engines were to be built and orders were out for 539 more diesels, and in 1960 for a further 950. As ever, the new trend was faithfully reflected in miniature on the West London line, where more and more of the through services were taken over by the new machines, and by 1964 the steam engine was becoming a rarity. One advertised service — from Manchester to Eastbourne — was still in July 1964 steam-hauled by former Southern Railway Pacifics, and an excursion train from Broad Street to Southampton at the end of that year was drawn by a British Railways Pacific, and in 1965 the Stirling-Newhaven cartrain was still being worked through by Stanier 4-6-0 engines. British Railways 2-8-0 engines still made occasional appearances on exchange-freight trains, but these were soon replaced. As one Region after another closed down its steam running-sheds almost the only steam engines still to be seen by the end of 1966 were those working the little-known Kensington-Clapham Junction service, which remained steam-hauled to the very last. From 1948 onwards it had been run by ex-SECR 0-4-4 tank engines (Nos 31158, 31303 and 31542) and the much older No 31660 built for the London, Chatham & Dover Railway in 1891, until all were replaced by British Railways 2-6-2 or 2-6-4 tank engines to the end of steam working. The last steam shed on the Brighton line was closed on

Above:
BR 2-6-4T No 80154 of 1957 running round a train at Kensington in 1966.

Below:
A visitor from London Transport. LT 0-6-0PT L92 (ex-GWR No 5786) of 1929 shunting at the south end of Kensington in 1966.

14 June 1965, the last steam engine left Willesden on 4 January 1966, and the last from Old Oak Common on 22 May 1966, and the British Railways board decreed the end of steam haulage of passenger trains from 3 September 1966 (except for the Southern Region). The very last steam-operated passenger service in London was that from Kensington to Clapham Junction, usually worked by 2-6-2 tank engines Nos 82019 and 82029, or by the 2-6-4 tank engine 80154. When the last train ran into Clapham Junction on 7 July 1967 it was the end of an era.

Looking back on the range of engines used on the line in the 20 years since nationalisation, one is struck by the rapidity of replacement by the new standard types. The GWR had already by 1949 scrapped the last of its 2-4-0 tank engines, so frequently used on the West London lines, and the 0-4-2 tank engines were rarely seen, most of them being engaged on motor-train services on small branch lines in the West Country. Their former London duties were taken over by the ubiquitous 0-6-0 pannier-tank engines.[10] Longer distance services were handled by 2-6-0 mixed-traffic engines, with the occasional appearance of a 'Hall' or 'Castle' 4-6-0 types.[11] From the London Midland Region there was soon the same uniformity to be seen, post-grouping 0-6-0 tank engines of 1931 on transfer goods trains, later replaced by 2-6-2 and 2-6-4 tank types, along with some new 2-6-0 engines for general duties. Long-distance trains were worked by 'Stanier' 4-6-0 engines, no less than 38 of them being noted on a wide variety of trains.[12] In a considerable change from prewar practice, engines from the Eastern Region worked fairly frequently over the line, mainly ex-GER 0-6-0 and ex-LNER 4-6-0 types.[13]

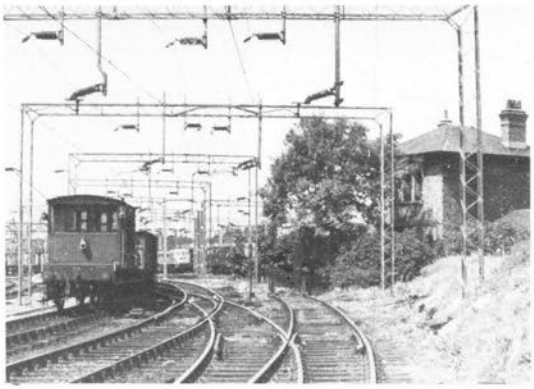
The Southern Region in contrast kept many of its older engines, often from pre-grouping days, in constant use. Four elegant ex-LBSCR Atlantic express engines were regularly seen on through passenger services, the last of which — No 32424 *Beachy Head* — worked in 1958 right up to the time of scrapping. It was the last Atlantic working in Britain. The other Brighton types seen were mostly 2-6-0 goods and occasionally 0-4-4 tank classes.[14] From the LSWR mostly 0-4-4 tank types were seen, and few of the once so common 4-4-0 engines, though the 4-4-0 'T9' class engine No 30119 (the former 'Royal' engine) passed through in May 1949 resplendent in green British Railways livery. From the SECR came occasional 4-4-0 and 0-6-0 engines, and the 0-4-4 tank engines for the 'shuttle' earlier described.[15] Ex-Southern Railway engines were of the 'King Arthur' 4-6-0 and 'West Country' and 'Merchant Navy' 4-6-2 types, and some 2-6-0 mixed-traffic engines.[16]

British Railways engines noted were mainly of the 2-6-2 and 2-6-4 tank types for local and goods services, while on through passenger trains a variety of 4-6-0 and 2-6-0 types were seen. Two 'Britannia' class 4-6-2 engines were also noted.[17] The foregoing is necessarily only a sketchy outline of the engines to be seen in the last 20 years of steam working, but it may help to give an idea of the scene at that period. As ever, the line was useful when locomotives had to be transferred to other Regions, and many instances are known of such special workings. A few of special interest were the transfer of 17 War Department

2-8-0 goods engines from Kent to the North in August 1952, and the passage of the largest engines of all — the 2-10-0 type — one of which (No 90737) was sent to Ashford in 1952, and another (No 92028) to Brighton in 1959. A most handsome engine, passing through in 1953 hauled by an ex-Southern Railway Mogul, was the ex-Caledonian Railway 'Single' No 123 of 1886, fairly radiant in light blue livery, for display at Battersea. This was a remarkable enough sight, but something more startling was to come 10 years later when the same engine passed through under its own steam, between Willesden and Norwood Junction on 10 and 15 September 1963, for a visit to the Bluebell line.[18] There were visits also by other historic locomotives, on special or exhibition trains; the GWR 4-4-0 No 3440, *City of Truro*, of 1903, famous for its speed exploits, made several appearances, one being in February 1961 on a Westward Television Exhibition train, while two very well known LNER engines, now preserved and vivid in their original liveries, made brief appearances — the 4-6-2 express engine No 4472 *Flying Scotsman* on an excursion train from Gainsborough on 11 September 1965 and the blue streamlined No 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley* going south for passenger workings in the Southern Region during June 1967.

Noted in this period also was the use of the line for a Royal train, perhaps for the first time for some ninety years. This was on 28 October 1966 for a train from Uckfield to Merthyr, hauled by the Western Region diesel locomotive No 1054 *Western Governor*.

With the ending of regular steam working in 1967 began a period of modernisation which is described in the next chapter.



Above:
Electrification of the northern end of the line to facilitate locomotive changes; the old Willesden station house is on the right.

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1 This occurred on 9 January 1953, the trucks tumbling down the embankment on to Scrubs Lane. With the introduction of continuously-braked goods trains such runaways are unlikely to occur.

2 The LNWR pattern levers, with ring-grips and operated with the signalman standing facing the lines, gave place to a bank of smaller levers with hinged hand-grips, worked with the signalman's back to the lines but facing his instruments.

3 The work was done in four stages to minimise interruption to traffic. The first stage was cutting the up main line just south of Addison Bridge and rerouting up traffic by one of the long open-ended sidings adjacent to the Warwick Road depot. A week later the down line was slewed to use part of the old up line, then back to its old path just south of the bridge, thus leaving Earl's Court Junction free for realignment. The third stage was to complete the single-track electric line from the station's southwest bay, through an unused arch of the bridge, to a new junction where it divided to go down into the cutting. The fourth stage was to realign the down through line upon the bed of the old up line, and to route the new up line by way of the former long siding loop back to its old path by Lillie Bridge.

4 As the up line from Chelsea is on a rising gradient (for Cremorne Bridge) and the descent into Chelsea Dock a steep one, the up line signalling at this point consisted of a splitting distant signal (north of Chelsea signalbox) followed by a single 'home' before the box, and a splitting 'home' of two arms for the separate Dock lines and one for the bridge. The two Dock lines had uphill-facing catchpoints, and the main up line had a sand-drag just before the bridge over the river.

5 When the collapse of part of the big Clapham Junction signalbox spanning the main lines blocked certain tracks in 1965, the 'Olympia Shuttle' was worked solely from the Brighton side.

6 A note on some engines seen on regular services (not on excursions or other special trains) will be of interest. The engine numbers are those of British Railways, but origin is easily traced. GWR engines had four-figure numbers. Five-figure numbers commencing with '3' were ex-Southern, '4' and '5' ex-LMSR, '6' ex-LNER, and higher numbers were British Railways engines, built after nationalisation.

Date	Advertised train	Engine	No
25 August, 1951	Hastings-Manchester	0-6-0	33037
5 July, 1953	Birmingham-Brighton	4-6-0	45021
		4-4-0	31591
27 July, 1953	Birmingham-Brighton	4-6-0	44760
1 August, 1953	Manchester-Brighton	4-6-0	44686

8 August, 1953	Wolverhampton-Hastings	0-6-0	33017
		0-6-0	33023
29 August, 1956	Manchester-Brighton	4-4-0	30915
24 August, 1957	Hastings-Leicester	4-4-2	42424
26 June, 1958	Brighton-Manchester	4-4-0	31777
26 June, 1958	Brighton-Manchester	4-4-0	30900
		4-6-2	34047
28 June, 1958	Manchester-Brighton	4-6-0	44747
25 July, 1958	Brighton-Walsall	2-6-0	32340
26 July, 1958	Coventry-Eastbourne	4-6-0	30769
26 July, 1958	Wolverhampton-Eastbourne	2-6-0	31879
2 August, 1958	Wolverhampton-Eastbourne	2-6-0	32338
11 August, 1958	Leicester-Brighton	4-6-0	44821
8 August, 1959	Walsall-Eastbourne	2-6-0	32345
16 July, 1960	Brighton-Manchester	4-6-0	75074
1 July, 1964	Manchester-Eastbourne	4-6-0	73115
25 July, 1964	Manchester-Eastbourne	4-6-2	34021

7 Troop trains could be relied upon to produce unusual locomotives for the line. Some examples are:

Date	Train	Engine	No
28 August, 1954	Tulse Hill-Holt	4-6-0	61006
27 February, 1957	Parkeston Quay-Victoria	4-6-0	61280+61375
11 November, 1966	Elgin-Portsmouth	4-6-2	70002

Examples of north-to-south summer excursions and the engines used are as under:

14 May, 1950	Watford-Hastings	2-6-0	31903
14 June, 1950	Watford-Eastbourne	4-6-0	44911
July 1950	Northampton-Brighton	4-6-0	45353
10 June, 1952	Hitchin-Eastbourne	4-6-0	61139
30 July, 1952	Northampton-Brighton	4-4-0	41167
24 August, 1952	Tring-Eastbourne	4-6-0	44875
5 April, 1953	Watford-Brighton	4-6-0	45071
July 1953	Leicester-Brighton	4-6-0	61273
(1954)	GER line-Eastbourne	0-6-0	65450
		0-6-0	65476
8 July, 1956	Rugby-Margate	4-6-0	44837
16 March, 1957	Birkenhead-Dover	4-6-0	5001
5 June, 1957	Watford-Hastings	4-6-0	44772
24 August, 1957	Perry Bar-Brighton	4-6-0	45395
		4-6-0	45419
22 September, 1957	Hitchin-Worthing	4-4-0	30909
31 July, 1958	Luton-Brighton	0-6-0	44043
21 September, 1958	Bedford-Eastbourne	4-6-0	73142
24 September, 1959	Uxbridge-Eastbourne	4-6-0	30793
16 June, 1960	Welwyn-Eastbourne	4-6-0	75074
19 September, 1964	Colne-Eastbourne	4-6-0	44860

Excursions from south to north were less common, but some typical ones were as under:

3 May, 1953	Brighton-High Wycombe	4-4-2	32424
July 1953	Ramsgate-Sheffield	4-6-0	61063
1 July, 1955	Eastbourne-Wembley	4-6-2	34047

A few excursions originated from Kensington itself, as under:

30 May, 1954	Kensington-Eastbourne	4-6-2	34080
26 May, 1956	Kensington-Eastbourne	4-6-2	34045
10 June, 1956	Kensington-Eastbourne	4-6-2	34017

8 Other examples of football special trains and their engines are the following:

Date	Train	Engine	No
3 December, 1949	Watford-Brighton	2-6-0	42812
11 November, 1950	Eastbourne-Blackhorse Road	4-6-2	34037
7 April, 1951	Brighton-Wembley	2-6-0	31893+31908
13 December, 1952	Slough-Epsom	4-6-2	34089
28 November, 1952	Watford-New Cross Gate	2-6-4T	80037
19 December, 1955	Wimbledon-High Wycombe	2-6-0	31903
12 March, 1956	(Six trains to Wembley)	4-6-2	34046, 34067, 34089 34090, 34092, 34102
12 January, 1957	Woking-Black Horse Road	2-6-0	31631
2 March, 1957	Manchester-Boscombe	4-6-0	73111+73115
20 February, 1959	Brighton-Rotherham	4-6-2	34099

9 The four express steam engines on display bore the following trial liveries:

M4762, Southern Railway — green
M4763, London & North Eastern — green
M4764, Great Western — green
M5292, London & North Western — lined black.

Also on show was the Southern Railway electric locomotive CC2 painted blue.

10 This was by far the largest engine class in the country, with well over a thousand modern examples; to 863 of them built by Collett of the GWR should be added 210 more built by Hawksworth and indeed there were so many of them that by 1959 some were being scrapped after only nine years service. It is a good example of an old design proving so satisfactory that it is repeated more than half a century later.

11 Noted on special trains were the 4-6-0 type No 4082 *Windsor Castle*, No 5039 *Rhuddlan Castle* and No 5061 *Earl of Birkenhead*, while of the smaller-wheeled types were No 6812 *Chesford Grange*, No 6961 *Stadham Hall* and No 6978 *Haroldstone Hall*. The 2-6-0 class had been specially cleared in May 1957 to run through to Brighton and several were noted on this run. In June 1958 the 0-6-0 pannier-tank engine No 5786 passed through on an unusual occasion — it had been sold to London Transport and was being delivered to Lillie Bridge Depot; repainted dark brown and numbered L92 it worked for the next 10 years, often appearing in the south end of Kensington station on shunting duties from its home yard.

12 Noted on passenger trains were also a Horwich-built 2-6-0 engine No 42812 (looking strange in bright green livery) and on goods trains the heavy 2-8-0 engine No 48312, the 0-6-0 No 44043 and — unsuitably — the 4-4-0 compound passenger engine No 41167.

13 The 4-6-0 engines were Nos 61006, 61119, 61280, 61375 and 61399. Pre-grouping engines noted were Nos 64664 and 64690 of the 0-6-0 type from the GER, and from the GNR the 2-6-0 mixed-traffic engine No 61723 and two 0-6-2 tank engines Nos 69441 and 69481; these last two were however specially requested for a railway society tour and so are not typical.

14 The Brighton Atlantics noted were Nos 32421 *South Foreland*, 32424 *Beachy Head*, 32425 *Trevose Head* and 32426 *St Albans Head*, and the 2-6-0 mixed-traffic engines seen were Nos 32338-40 and 33242-44.

15 From the SECR were noted the former 'Royal' engine No 31777 and three more of the 4-4-0 type — Nos 31506, 31591 and 31766 — and the 'Mogul' engines Nos 31852, 31859 and 31901, and the 0-6-0 engines Nos 31370 and 31716, the former being more than 60 years old.

16 Sixteen 'West Country' and one 'Merchant Navy' type 4-6-2 engines were noted, and 13 'Schools' type 4-4-0 engines. Of older types there were three 'King Arthur' 4-6-0 engines, Nos 30767 *Sir Vallance*, 30769 *Sir Malan* and 30703 *Sir Onzlake*. Short-distance inter-region freight trains were handled for several years by the 2-6-4 tank engine No 31911.

17 Some 2-6-0 engines noted were Nos 76010 and 76057, 4-6-0 engines Nos 75030, 75061, 75069 and 75074 (all of Class 4) and of Class 5 Nos 73111, 73113 and 73115. The Pacific engines were Nos 70002 *Geoffrey Chaucer* and 70020 *Mercury*.

18 Other transfers noted up to the end of 1967 were those of the GWR 4-4-0 engine No 9017 to Brighton for the Bluebell Railway in 1962, and of the Southern Railway 4-4-0 No 926 *Repton* and 0-4-4 tank engine No 30053 from Brighton to Liverpool (for shipment to the USA) on 13 April, 1967. During December 1967 10 locomotives scheduled for preservation were moved from Stratford to Brighton in four trains. Four engines were from the Southern Railway — 4-6-0 No 850 *Lord Nelson*, 4-6-0 No 777 *Sir Lamiel*, 4-4-0 No 925 *Cheltenham* and 0-6-0 No 33001. Three were from the LSWR — 4-4-0 No 120, 0-4-4 tank engine No 245 and the very old 2-4-0 well-tank engine No 587. The LMSR contributed the 2-6-4 tank engine No 2500, the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway the 2-4-2 tank engine No 1008, while British Railways construction was represented by the modern 4-6-2 express engine No 70000 *Britannia*.

9
Modernisation: 1967-83

When British Railways' tank engine No 82019 drew London's last steam-hauled passenger train out of Kensington (Olympia) on 7 July 1967, modernisation of both station and line was already under way, and over the next 15 years all of the local facilities (goods yards, intermediate stations and marshalling sidings) were closed and some branch connections removed. Following the line from north to south, at Willesden the electric carriage sheds at Mitre Bridge were cleared and on the site was built (with certain poetic justice) a gigantic plant for destroying motor cars, named 'Proler' from its designers, the Proler Steel Corporation of Houston, Texas. This could 'process', it was claimed, the almost incredible number of 1,500 cars per day when in full use, pulverising them into neat rectangular bales of scrap which in this compact form could be removed by train. A siding for 34 16-ton open wagons was built alongside the plant, and two trains a day could remove over a thousand tons of metal to reprocessing plants. As the condemned cars had to be either carried or towed in by road, a modern half-barrier type level crossing was put in to give road access.

Going on southward, the North Pole Junction layout was simplified, the down line to Old Oak Common merging into the up line for a short distance of single track just north of the signalbox, with a facing crossover line opposite the box. The westward branch into the former GWR carriage depot was lifted, these changes being made about 1969.

At Viaduct Junction the lines from the Ealing & Shepherds Bush Railway, for several years out of use, were lifted and the redundant signalbox dismantled in 1969 and rebuilt about 70yd further south, only to be closed altogether six years later.

The many sidings of the former two companies' Shepherds Bush goods and coal yards were abandoned in November 1967 but remained in place for many years longer. That part of the yard nearest to the running lines was the original depot built for George Stephenson's coal in 1840, and walking along this one day after its closure I was impressed

by the neatly-squared stone blocks, piled four-deep in a lavish constructional way to form the platform facing. Each stone had a small rectangular incision, cut diagonally at its centre, with two bolt-holes, and this supplied the answer. They were of course the original stone sleepers of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway of 1829, found too rigid for *Rocket* and its sisters and sold in 1839 to the Thames Junction Railway. This used them for some years, but when the track was improved the stones were laid aside, and Robert Stephenson evidently appropriated them for his yard. As by 1974 bulldozers were imminent to clear the site I bought six of the stones from the British Railways Board at the lordly price of 50p apiece ('as and where lying, purchaser to undertake dismantling and leave the site to the satisfaction of the Board's representative'). In the end I only managed to rescue four — they were very heavy — but these at least are preserved.

Opposite Shepherds Bush goods yard but on the other side of the running lines, the abandoned embankment of the connection with the Hammersmith & City Railway was now levelled to form the approach road to a motorway, only a small portion of the brick viaduct at its northern end remaining.

Uxbridge Road station house, astride the line at the road bridge, was demolished in July 1968, and the much older Shepherds Bush station house a few years later. At the site of Richmond Junction more blocks of flats had been built and the cutting walled off.

Kensington (Olympia) had now been cleared of all its old buildings, and neat new ones, for Motorail and the Underground service, gave it an up-to-date appearance. With the growth of Motorail even the rebuilt northwest bay proved inadequate at times, and a supplementary loading ramp was built in the northeast bay in 1971, but later dismantled. Then in 1983 very considerable changes were made to the station. Both the east side bays were abandoned altogether and the rails lifted, the space now given over to car parks for Olympia, and at the same time the up platform line was cut at both ends and relaid as a long siding, with buffers at the north end and

Left:
D6960 on an oil-tank train at West Brompton in 1973.
J. Scrace

Above:
New track pattern at the site of Earl's Court Junction — the former down line (centre) changed to up traffic, the new down line (far left) and Lillie Bridge depot (far right).

Right:
The new layout for the independent electric line through Addison Road Bridge in 1967.

connection only through a side-arch of Addison Bridge to the south; this left the through lines unencumbered (as the former mid-station crossings were also removed) and permitted higher train speeds. All station facilities are therefore now on the down, or west, side of this once extensive station.

Going on south, Warwick Road goods and coal yards were by 1971 out of use and by 1975 the rails were lifted and the site fenced off. The exchange sidings at Lillie Bridge had dwindled to four by 1968 and by 1980 none. The signalbox there had been closed in 1974. Only the tiny office building of the 1840 railway — built for the canal in 1828 — still stood in good repair beside the line.

Above:
Entering Kensington in 1969 is D8201 with a milk-tank train. *J. H. C. Smith*

Below:
A down freight train — D7646 in 1969 at Kensington. *J. H. C. Smith*

At West Brompton the bare girders of the bridge that had carried the station buildings, left spanning the rails for several years, were removed by 1973 when the road bridge was renovated. In 1969 Cremorne Bridge, by then over a century old, needed new decking, and single-line working was introduced so that each side could be relaid in turn; the up line served from May to August of that year, the down line from August to December. The new lines were laid centrally on the new bed — they had hitherto been offset, a survival of the mixed-gauge of a century earlier. The small Falcon Lane goods depot (named after a minor river it largely covered) was closed and part of the site used for the new Southern Region 'power signalbox' controlling a large area, opened on 17 May 1980. At Clapham Junction the lines serving Platforms 16 and 17 were laid with third rail in July 1968. Finally, at the very end of the line at Longhedge Junction the layout was simplified in September 1978. Trains now crossed over to the Factory Junction lines at Longhedge Junction, then back on to a new reversible single-line spur which near the road bridge became double-track and followed its old route to Stewarts Lane Junction. The connection with the line from Pouparts Junction was then removed as redundant. The management of the line (that is, from Mitre Bridge to Latchmere Junction), which had been in Western Region hands since nationalisation, was transferred to London Midland Region on 1 February 1970.

So much for changes along the line. The services using it in the 1970s and 1980s were with the exception of Motorail (which will be described later) little changed with respect to passengers but much modernised over freight. The 'Clapham Junction shuttle' continued to run, four times a working day, though in a variety of forms — electro-diesel working in 1968, 4TC units in 1971, Class 33 haulage in 1981, Class 73 in 1982, and from that year a train fitted for remote control provided the easiest working of all, the locomotive propelling the train into Kensington and requiring no shunting at all. Long-distance trains continued to provide north-to-south holiday services, and strenuous efforts were made by British Rail to popularise travel by 'PreView' and 'Merrymaker' trips. Excursion and special trains lent variety every year[1] including the odd visit of London Transport 'tube' stock — a six-car 'Bakerloo' train of 1938 vintage on 14 October 1973. Coaches of the Royal train used the line for inter-region transfer in May and September 1979 and in February 1977 and July 1980 for turning. Kensington also served (if by a devious route) as a relief terminus for certain trains during track changes at King's Cross in March 1977, as well as for football or similar excursion trains.[2] While most special trains were locomotive-hauled, a few were run with DMU sets.[3]

Freight traffic, for which the line was so important, showed considerable modernisation in the years under review. Gone was the old goods train of loose-coupled trucks and the traditional guard's van, its place taken by the continuous-braked, one-purpose, set of special wagons. These were of many varieties. Coal trains were now so heavy that they often needed, even in the up direction (and therefore without the North Pole bank to climb) double-heading by a pair of Class 47 locomotives.[4] Milk traffic, hitherto handled at Kensington where the old northwest bay provided facilities, continued to use the line but mainly to Clapham Junction. Trains of aviation fuel ran daily, from 1969 onwards, to serve Gatwick Airport. The service known as 'Air-Braked Freight Network' came into use in 1976 including a daily Dover-Dundee working of 40 and 45ton wagons permitted to travel at speeds up to 75mph, and latterly a new — and unpopular — traffic has been that of toxic nuclear waste from Dungeness to Windscale, carried in special welded-steel tanks; these were at the end of 1983 in process of replacement by tanks of forged steel of even greater strength, in view of the concern felt in case of accident. Other trains were of cement tanks, container-flats, hopper trucks, and Italian, French,

Below:
A bulk milk-tank train passing the site of West Brompton station in June 1973, led by E6012. *J. Scrace*

Bottom:
D1753 in 1969 at the site of Richmond Junction. *J. H. C. Smith*

Belgian and German vans from the ferries. In this connection it is interesting to note that Kensington hosted an exhibition of modern goods wagons from 28 February to 2 March 1979 where 46 wagons of various sorts, including the 'Autic' car-carrier, the 'VTC' bogie coil wagon, and the bogie ferry-wagons of British Rail Engineering were displayed. Some other trains of interest passing through the station were the high-speed track-recording coach from Ashford to Willesden (11 November 1977), the 'Speno' rail-grinding unit RP55 from Stewarts Lane to Hitchin (January 1978) and a Route-Learning Car for the West London Extension line (9-13 March 1981).

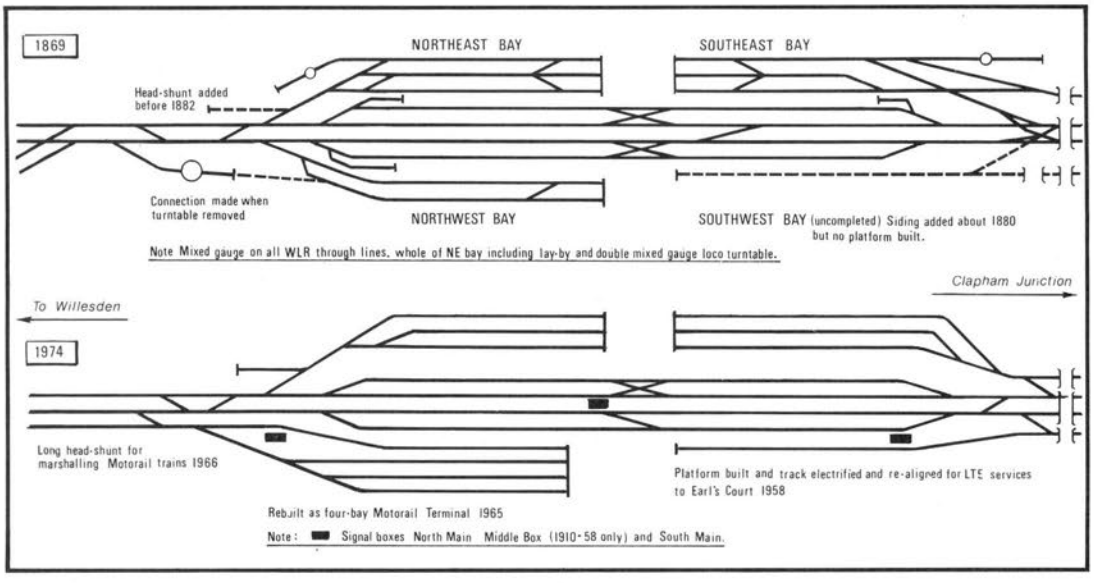
Two accidents occurred on the line in the period under review. On 30 August 1970 a Bristol to Margate excursion train struck a platelayers' trolley left on the line near Longhedge Junction and the Class 47 locomotive was derailed, fortunately without injuries, and in 1975 the driver of a train that overran buffers in Kensington was killed.

Rather belatedly, the British Railway Board woke up to the importance — and the good publicity — of preserving some of the more remarkable steam locomotives of the past, and though this came too late for many types that could have been saved even five years earlier it was nonetheless welcome. Brighton (Preston Park), Stratford, Tyseley, Hellifield, Berwick-on-Tweed and a few other places were used to store laid-up engines. Some which passed over the West London lines up to 1967 were mentioned in the last chapter, and after that year they were hauled 'dead' by diesel locomotives.[5]

Although steam working had long officially ceased, two very well-known locomotives were

Below:
Kensington station from the north, 24 March 1976. No 33.043 on Norwood Acton transfer freight train. *B. Morrison*

Bottom:
BR Type 3 No 6550 on a northbound oil train near Earl's Court, 26 September 1969. *J. H. Cooper-Smith*


1869
NORTHEAST BAY
SOUTHEAST BAY
Head-shunt added before 1882
Connection made when turntable removed
NORTHWEST BAY
SOUTHWEST BAY (uncompleted) Siding added about 1880 but no platform built.
Note Mixed gauge on all WLR through lines, whole of NE bay including lay-by and double mixed gauge loco turntable.
Clapham Junction
To Willesden
1974
Long head-shunt for marshalling Motorail trains 1966
Platform built and track electrified and re-aligned for LTE services to Earl's Court 1958
Rebuilt as four-bay Motorail Terminal 1965
Note: Signal boxes North Main Middle Box (1910-58 only) and South Main.

allowed to run on the West London lines for special occasions in 1971 and 1974. The first was the GWR 4-6-0 engine No 6000 *King George V* which brought its owners' 'Cider Train' to Kensington on 4 October 1971 and took it away in the form of an excursion to Swindon on 7 October; in between it had to be worked 'light-engine' to Greenford for turning. The second was the LNER 4-6-2 engine No 4472 *Flying Scotsman* which worked a 'Burmah-Castrol' exhibition train into Kensington and was on display in the southeast bay from 1 August to 11 August 1974. It should be added that there were occasional appearances of steam engines in Kensington station for several years after 1968, in the form of one or another of the three GWR 0-6-0 pannier-tank engines of London Transport that took over duties in Lillie Bridge depot. Now painted red and numbered L92, L94 and L99, they would emerge from their depot briefly and draw half way into the southern end of the station to shunt stores trains on to the transfer sidings beside the main line.

It is time now to review the major development on the line in this period, namely the service called Motorail. This, offering overnight transport of car and sleeping berths for its passengers, was no new thing, having been introduced on the East Coast Route in 1955, but its development soon involved through-use of the West London lines. By 1956 there was a Manchester-Dover car-train which lasted 10 years (its northern terminal latterly changed to Newton-le-Willows) and by 1958 a Glasgow-

Above:
Kensington (Addison Road) station.

Above right:
The Class 74 E6197 on an Acton-Wimbledon exchange freight train passing the site of West Brompton station, with the abandoned goods line on the left, 14 August 1973. *J. Scrace*

Right:
BR 25.183 on a Motorail train from Perth at Kensington, 1 August 1974. *K. Lane*

Eastbourne (later Newhaven) car-train which lasted 12 years. As the idea grew in popularity, efforts were made to supersede the makeshift loading facilities round London (Holloway, King's Cross goods station, Marylebone and others) by concentrating loading in one London station where there was plenty of room for them — namely Kensington (Olympia). Here a complete rebuilding of the former two-line northwest bay was undertaken in 1965. Four lines, served by three wide platforms, were built, a large overall shed to cover them, and neat new buildings for reception, waiting room and refreshment purposes. While this work was still being done one service was already starting from Kensington in 1965, for Fishguard, and when the new terminal was opened on 24 May 1966 it took over the Perth service from Holloway and added two more — to Holyhead and St Austell — thus serving England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland very well for the next two or three years. Special rolling stock was devised for these trains. At first covered vans were used, then an experiment was made with two-level vans in 1962 (these proved however dangerous) but after 1966 with the end of steam-haulage it was felt that the cars could be carried in open trucks. A number of mainline carriages were at this period being scrapped, and from their frames and running-gear new 'car flats' were made by the simple expedient of cross-plank flooring, to carry four cars apiece. After some bad experience with windscreen breakages (which necessitated a very expensive stock of replacement screens for popular types being held at terminal stations, with mechanics to fit them) protective mattresses were fitted over the windscreens at the time of loading. Then as the traffic continued to grow, trials were made with using 'Cartic' open double-deck trucks normally used for export car deliveries to the ports. When these proved awkward to load, with cars of different dimensions and often with roof-racks, the service reverted mainly to flats of which plenty were available.

The best years of the service were probably 1966-1979, helped by the massive price-increases on petrol, and it was claimed that about 100,000 cars a year were being carried. It was never a cheap service, but it saved time, wear and tear, and above all stress. There were however some adverse factors. One was, ironically, the very excellence of other InterCity services; the High Speed Train services of the Western Region, for instance, required the slower Motorail trains to be diverted to slow lines or passing-loops to let them by. A further factor was the need for the train to arrive the right way round for the cars to be driven off, which governed the route to be followed.[6] Another factor was damage to the sides of cars by stone-throwing vandals en route. Operational difficulties included the need for holding spare trains (and especially sleeping cars) at Kensington for relief trains, and the expense of maintaining specially

trained staff at remote points when their services might be required only for a few hours each week. Most trains from Kensington needed double-heading (usually by Class 25 locomotives) and sometimes had to be run in triplicate.[7]

All these factors combined to cause a fall in patronage, and by 1981 the number of cars carried had fallen to about 57,000, and when the figures for 1982 looked like being no better it was decided to discontinue using Kensington, with its expensive overheads in staff, after the end of the summer season. There would still be Motorail services, but in the form of trains of cars despatched unaccompanied, from Euston or Paddington, while the passengers used the ordinary InterCity services.

With the demise of Motorail for the time being, considerable reduction was made in the size of Kensington station. During 1983 most of the east, or up, side rails were lifted and the northeast and southeast bays filled in between platform faces to meet an insatiable (but profitable) demand for car-parking space for Olympia. The crossovers between main and platform lines in both directions were removed, as was the long 'head-shunt' line on the down side built for Motorail traffic in 1966. At the same time the up platform line was rerouted through a side-arch of Addison Bridge, leaving the through lines clear of junctions and permitting higher speeds through the station.

Looking now at the motive power used on the line, one is immediately struck by the small number of classes employed, a tribute of course to diesel

Top left:
Passing Kensington with a southbound mixed freight train in October 1976 is BR 33.051. *C. R. Davis*

Above left:
Heading on. BR 47.005 on a southbound train. *B. Morrison*

Above:
Spare car flats are passed by BR 37.029 at Lillie Bridge sidings in July 1976. *K. Lane*

versatility. Over the period 1965-1983 passenger traffic was mainly in the hands of three types of diesels, the Classes 25, 33 and 47, with occasional help from Classes 52 and 55 and the electro-diesel Class 73. Most freight traffic was hauled by the same types or Class 37, and the smaller Class 11 and 15 machines occasionally appeared. A station pilot was retained in some years, usually of Class 08.

Several plans have from time to time been made for the incorporation of the West London lines in an outer circle route round London. One was prepared by the London Regional Railway Construction Committee of the RIBA in 1943, and another was under study by the Greater London Council in 1973; this envisaged a 'Ring-Rail' that would require only a Thames tunnel, from Charlton to Canning Town, to complete a circle by Willesden, Olympia, Fulham Road and Clapham Junction. More pertinent perhaps (because it would be easy to implement) was the proposal by the Wandsworth Public Transport Users' Association in 1978 for a passenger service from Wimbledon to Willesden. Put to the British Railways Board, this was turned down on the grounds that the line was not electrified (it has in fact two different electric systems at the two ends and a third in the middle) and that no DMU trains were available.

Not to close on a note of nostalgia, the future of the line, now simplified from its onetime 17 connections to seven has many possibilities. The Motorail facility might well be needed again if some new harassment falls on the motorist. The Channel Tunnel project, with its century-long history of postponements, must one day be realised, if only in the form of the single-tunnel 'budget line' proposed by the British Railways Board in 1979.

The West London Extension line, built already to more than 'Berne Gauge' clearances from its broad-gauge past, would need no expensive rebuilding, and the whole now-dismantled east side of Kensington station offers space for an adequate if not spectacular Channel Tunnel terminus.[8] The little line that *Punch* derided as from nowhere to nowhere has grown to be a vital artery in London's railway plan. Kensington station, for all its ups and downs over the last century and a half, could still become London's best known station of all.

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1 A selection of the excursion or special trains working through the West London lines between 1972 and 1982 will give an idea of the wide range of this traffic.

Date	*Service*	*Locomotives*
18 March, 1972	Nelson-Eastbourne	D6507+D6570
15 April, 1972	Swansea-Brighton	D1666
15 April, 1972	Swansea-Eastbourne	D1676
3 November, 1973	Burton-Ramsgate	D1851
3 November, 1973	Bedford-Dover	D1631
24 November, 1973	Ramsgate-Cardiff	D6572 to Kensington, then D1589
1 August, 1974	Swansea-Brighton	47.151
5 August, 1974	Parson Street-Bognor	47.128
4 May, 1975	Luton-Folkestone	33.204
10 May, 1975	Ramsgate-Spalding	33.046

Date	*Service*	*Locomotives*
14 May, 1975	Birmingham-Folkestone	33.035
18 May, 1975	Weston super Mare-Dover	47.083
24 August, 1975	Edinburgh-Chichester	33.051+33.036
26 June, 1976	Ramsgate-Ely	33.064
3 July, 1976	Folkestone-Newcastle	47.135
28 January, 1977	Folkestone-Cambridge	33.020
29 June, 1977	Liverpool-Gillingham	33.043
21 October, 1977	Dover-Morpeth	33.056
7 January, 1978	Scarborough-Hove	47.525
1 April, 1978	Alfreton-Dover	47.445
22 April, 1978	York-Hastings	47.171
9 February, 1980	Stoke-Norwood	25.222+25.189
22 April, 1980	Nottingham-Folkestone	47.325
7 March, 1981	Wellington-Dover	47.035
27 February, 1982	Plymouth-Dover	55.035 to Kensington, then 73.108+73.138
8 May, 1982	Guildford-Spalding	33.025
5 June, 1982	Wolverhampton-Margate	33.060
31 July, 1982	Manchester-Newhaven	33.044+33.059
5 September, 1982	Manchester-Canterbury	33.049

2 An example of a special train terminating at Kensington is a football special from Derby to Fulham Broadway, the passengers being taken on from Kensington by District line train reversing at High Street Kensington (11 October 1969). Another example is that of four special trains for women's hockey match at the White City, from Crewe, Wolverhampton, Nottingham and Barrow (14 March, 1970), and another three trainloads of protestors — out of 34 trains chartered by trade unions — diverted to Kensington (21 February, 1971). Unusual special trains originating at Kensington were three on successive days 23-25 June, 1969) taking horses of the Household Cavalry and Metropolitan Police to Caernarvon for the investiture of the Prince of Wales. The train, which returned empty every night, consisted of 27 horse-boxes, three coaches and three vans and was hauled by two Class 25 diesel locomotives.

3 Examples are excursions Hemel Hempstead-Hastings (25 July, 1971), and Hastings-Spalding, to view the Lincolnshire bulb fields (12 May, 1973).

4 A typical day of freight workings on transfer traffic (14 August, 1973) showed D6569 drawing hopper-trucks (Greenford-Merstham), D6581 on freight (Temple Mills-Norwood), D6583 (Willesden-Norwood), D6734 (Queenborough-Temple Mills), E6107 (Acton-Wimbledon), E6047 with milk tanks, and D6597 on a train of oil tanks.

5 Many transfers of 'preserved' steam engines between places of storage made use of the West London lines, with diesel haulage. There is sometimes doubt about which cross-London route was used (some were routed by Kew) but the following are thought to have been hauled over the West London lines:

Railway of origin	**Engine/No**	**Transfer**	**Date**
LMS	4-6-0 45000	Stafford-Brighton	22 January, 1968
BR	2-10-0 92220	Stafford-Brighton	22 January, 1962
L&YR	2-4-2T 1008	Brighton-Tyseley	6 September, 1970
LSWR	4-4-0 120	Brighton-Tyseley	6 September 1970
Southern	4-4-0 925	Brighton-Tyseley	6 September 1970
LNER	2-6-2 4771	Leicester-Brighton	October 1970
LNWR	0-8-0 485	Leicester-Brighton	October 1970
MR	0-6-0 4027	Leicester-Brighton	October 1970
GCR	2-8-0 63601	Leicester-Brighton	October 1970
LNER	2-6-2 4771	Brighton-Norwich	20 January 1972

The ex-GER 0-6-0 engine No 1217-E was noted at Stewarts Lane awaiting transfer, and probably used this route also.

6 For example, a Motorail train from Stirling to Brockenhurst had to be worked through Kensington to bring it the right way round for unloading at its destination station.

7 Some of the most popular trains ran five times a week, examples being Kensington-St Austell in 1966, and Kensington-Inverness in 1973. At the height of the holiday season some trains had to run in triplicate. (For much of the information on the Motorail services I am indebted to the review by J. N. Faulkner, MCIT, published in *Railway World* in October 1982).

8 The dimensions of the three loading-gauges are (in metres) as follows:

Gauge	**Maximum width**	**Maximum height**
British Standard	2.740	4.000
'Berne'	3.150	4.280
Great Western b/g	3.505	4.372

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Below:
The last steam passenger service in London. BR 2-6-2T No 82019 leaves Clapham Junction for Kensington. The last run was on 7 July 1967. *A. McIntyre*

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